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DRAWN FROM MEMORY (*Autobiography*)

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"I WISH I COULD PAINT"

SEEN IN PERSPECTIVE

1895—1945

A Panorama of Fifty Years

By

PERCY V. BRADSHAW



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To
ELIZABETH MYERS
with admiration and gratitude

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AMONG the books on my shelves which have refreshed my memory during my journey through fifty years, and to whose authors I feel myself indebted, are "The Face of London," by Harold P. Chunn (*Simpkin Marshall, Ltd.*); "The Long Week-end," by Robert Graves and Alan Hodge (*Faber & Faber, Ltd.*); "The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature," by George Sampson (*Cambridge University Press*); "The Silver Jubilee Book" (*Odham's Press, Ltd.*), and various National newspapers and Official publications. I am also grateful to Messrs. Ward, Lock & Co., Ltd., for allowing me to quote from the second edition of Mrs. Beeton's "Book of Household Management."

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P. V. B.

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PROLOGUE

I HAVE just completed a journey which has lasted for over half a century, a journey which began in a world we shall never see again—a world of hansom cabs, top-hats and gas-light, of antimacassars and bustles, of solidity and security.

During my travels I have seen the transformation of a social structure which had seemed permanent, and have witnessed the growth of science and invention which resulted in the motor car, aeroplane, wireless and the talking picture; I have studied with especial interest developments in art, the drama and literature, and I have lived through three wars.

In my autobiography, "Drawn from Memory," published in 1943,* I recalled some of my personal adventures in the arts. I now face the task of covering a much larger and more important canvas; I hope to see my subject in true perspective, but as evidence that I have no intention of approaching an ambitious enterprise from the standpoint of the solemnly objective historian, may I begin by reminding you that the very face of Britain has changed many times during the last half-century.

It has been framed in billowing side-whiskers, and disguised in many varieties of beard; it has experimented with moustaches which ranged from the aggressive to the depressing, and has occasionally reflected the influence of Charlie Chaplin; it has worn infinitely varied styles of headgear, and been associated with fantastic wardrobes of clothes. But, however adventurously it has responded to the whims and caprices of fashion, Britain's basic characteristics have remained; it is of those characteristics that I have been continually aware during my journey from Yesterday to To-day.

In our homes, mahogany and horse-hair or saddle-bag suites have been supplanted by chromium-plated furniture which, in turn, has been succeeded by designs of later reformers whose slogan was "Fitness for Purpose." Electricity has superseded gas in homes and industries, labour-saving devices have lightened the burdens of domestic service. Machines whose speed and power were unpredictable have swooped down upon a world which had

* Chapman & Hall, Ltd.

seemed secure—which was divided into water-tight compartments and rigid social barriers. A considerable part of that world has been destroyed, and those barriers have, during my lifetime, almost entirely disappeared.

Victorian Society and the Middle Classes, who had regarded the Lower Classes as a regrettable but inevitable background to their lives, were destined to be shocked out of their complacency. The growth of popular education, and the ardour of reformers in the early years of this century, made the Lower Classes articulate; those reformers had got tired of touching their hats to "the gentry" and of being at the mercy of often rapacious employers.

Soon these leaders of a social revolution found the opportunity to "get their own back." They took it. Inevitably they were guilty of excesses; men who were unused to power, and who had been inflamed by years of domination by Capital, lost their heads and stirred their followers to the verge of anarchy. Yet, when the Country which they so often reviled for its callousness—that country which was so often "going to the dogs"—was in danger, the hotheads of Labour and outraged leaders of Capital sank their differences and fought as brave and selfless comrades.

None of the elements of social reform which have developed since the Victorian era—better conditions for the working-classes, protection for the old and infirm, better education—have been achieved without intense struggle; none of the barriers between the Classes and the Masses have been broken down without bitter fighting; but in those battles, Britain has displayed its real character—its invincible strength, that tolerance and good humour which will always govern its actions.

A sense of proportion is indeed necessary if one wishes to realize how the pattern of the Past has been woven into the fabric of the Present; glamorizing the "good old days" or looking pessimistically at to-day and to-morrow will never provide a true picture of Britain. I have seen periods of frustration and drift suddenly flame into fury; social unrest has, with little warning, plunged into upheavals which have threatened our very lives; three times within the last half-century have our social and political quarrels been forgotten; for we have been plunged into War. On each of these occasions our enemies have entirely misjudged the British character; they imagined that we were too preoccupied by our family quarrels to think of international problems or of our

national honour. We have seen Governments rise and fall, science put to devilish uses, our solid social structure threatened by internal convulsions. And in two great wars we have had to fight for our existence.

Trouble has always spurred us to supreme effort and sacrifice, the threat of disaster has summoned hidden reserves, and great Causes called forth our finest efforts. Always, hovering over us like a cloud, has been the menace of Germany—her lust for power, and dreams of world-domination fostered by a megalomaniac Kaiser and the wild nightmares of a house-painter who became the incarnation of evil.

We shall always mystify our enemies, confuse our friends, and surprise ourselves; we will argue, quarrel, and laugh at each other so that all the world may hear—and yet, in a national emergency, display a unity, self-control and discipline which weathers the fiercest storms and snatches victory from the very edge of defeat. How are these bewildering contradictions to be reconciled—our apparent slowness of thought; our controlled emotions, our flat refusal to see danger until it is on our very doorsteps, our alleged tendency to lose every battle but the last?

I think that all these things are to be explained by the British *character*, an ancestry of two thousand years—a philosophy and a store of deep wisdom and experience acquired during many centuries of trial and error. From this ancestry the Briton has surely derived his strength. Within very recent years, our country has been saved by our youths who had been fiercely criticized as spineless and pleasure-loving. We have seen the people of Britain, civilians of all ages, in the very forefront of the battle, unarmed; we have watched ordinary men and women as they faced death and endured the destruction of their homes. We have lived through years of trial, and witnessed deeds of heroism unmatched in all our long history; surely, without boast or pride, we may recall the words of William Pitt the younger, who, after Trafalgar, paid this tribute to his country:

“England has saved herself by her courage; she will save Europe by her example.”

Our American friends have, on many occasions, praised the British spirit during the World War, and from a little book of verse which I wrote during the War, I quote the following, which acknowledged America's tributes, and touched lightly—yet, I think, truthfully—upon the theme of our long ancestry:

WE SHARE THEIR PRAISE

America, thanks for your praise;
But may we, please, share the bouquets
With our Ancestors—who fought their Wars
With their courage, their clubs, and their claws—
Who got busy collecting the pelts
Of Phœnicians, Romans and Celts?

They bludgeoned the Dane and the Gaul
(They didn't like strangers, at all).
They scrapped with the Saxons and Jutes
And battle-axed heaps of the brutes,
Then—found it was 1066;
And the Conqueror trumped all their tricks.

They then fought a Hundred Years War
(And never knew what it was for).
They faced the Armada of Spain,
And when it was sunk, fought again.
They fought Plague, and Famine, and Fire,
And never knew when to retire.

And when things began to look blue,
They fought—and they won—Waterloo.
Then they had the Crimean affair
(And that gave our Brass Hats a scare!)
The Boer War—trouble again!
Till Mafeking banished their pain.

And then came "The Great War"—and *this*—
To add to our story of bliss!
So War is a thing that we know.
We knew it all—Ages ago.

* * * * *

If Hitler's worst threats left us cold—
It's because—we're 2,000 years old.

VICTORIAN HOMES

BEFORE I begin my journey, let me show you a domestic picture—of the boudoir of Her Royal Highness, Princess Victoria, in the year 1897.

This period-piece will help you to realize that, even in the most exalted homes in the land, the sentiment of the family album was enshrined; relics of the past were treasured, irrespective of design, or intrinsic value; souvenirs of Mama, Papa, and other members of the family were venerated and exhibited, with the result that the average home became, with the passing of the years, a congested museum.

As an apotheosis of a period, this illustration seems to me well worth studying in detail. The designer had begun his deadly work with a very florid wallpaper. Floral designs of every conceivable character luxuriated over Victorian walls; the bolder and more gusty patterns were the most popular; a plain wallpaper was unthinkable, in spite of the fact that the design, however elaborate, was eventually to be covered almost entirely with pictures.

The pictures consisted chiefly of family portraits, which competed against illustrations of sentimental episodes. The corners of the Princess's walls are disguised by decorated brackets on which pottery rests; in front of one of these a roguish Cupid is suspended from the ceiling, while below the bracket a more solemn Cupid gazes doubtfully at his surroundings. The wall to the left is again almost covered with pictures, among which one dimly recognizes a Leighton and a Marcus Stone reproduction. Nearer the foreground is another wall-bracket which supports a statuette, an assortment of pottery of various shapes and sizes, and a bookshelf.

Beneath is the writing-table, so crowded with knick-knacks that the Princess must have found it exceedingly difficult to deal with her correspondence. She sits, looking very pensive, and apparently day-dreaming among her treasures, dressed in a quilted bodice with elaborately puffed leg-of-mutton sleeves. She is so hemmed in with furniture that one wonders how she manages to leave her desk. On her left is a table on which a pyramid of photograph-frames, clocks, fancy boxes and other bric-à-brac is arranged. At

the side of this table is a decorated bookcase surmounted by more photograph-frames, and a mysterious piece of white-wood furniture (is it a settle?) which threatens to be overgrown by painted flowers.

In the foreground, on an armchair draped with striped rugs, sits a woolly dog, gazing rather anxiously at his mistress. He cannot be a high-spirited animal, for one excited leap would bring the whole pyramid of treasures and curios crashing to the ground. Around this pyramid are vases, and above it is a cupboard, the shelves of which are crammed with trinkets, little animals, toys, statuettes, and more photo-frames, while, affixed to the wall beside it is another decorated bracket holding more pots. The immediate foreground is completed with a Japanese screen and a wooden chair of no recognizable period or design.

Humbler Victorian homes also rioted in bric-à-brac, family photographs, and sentimental pictures. Families loved to surround themselves with souvenirs of earlier days; every tiny object told its story of some family episode which was fondly recalled; the shells which baby Johnny collected at the seaside, a toy from an earlier Christmas stocking, a little filigree photo frame, a miniature of grandma as a girl, baby's first rattle; all were kept, and all helped to build up the story of the little world which was so active behind those Venetian blinds and carefully-drawn curtains. The furniture which had started the parents' first home, and which had been chosen to last a lifetime, had become hallowed by its history and associations; all the little souvenirs which, in the course of years were added to the home, told their own unique stories.

The fact that much of this furniture and most of its accessories were of deplorable design did not occur to the family. The parents loved that luxuriant wallpaper, the masses of ornament which sprawled over carpets and chairs, curtains, couches and cushions; for their taste ran to the ornate and baroque. Furniture that was not elaborately carved, fretted or embossed had no appeal to them; china and glass, smothered with pattern or decoration, fenders, fire-irons and mantelpieces all had to play their parts in the orgy of ornament. It was not the fault of the owners of these homes so much as of the designers of their contents.

The Victorian designer who catered for the bulk of the public indulged in the wildest licence, unhampered by any consideration of traditional styles. As long as the finished product looked lavish



(From the Illustrated London News)

PRINCESS VICTORIA OF WALES IN HER BOUDOIR, 1897.

[To face page 14]

and elaborate, he could exercise his technical skill in almost any direction he chose. Motifs were used with the utmost abandon. If the engraver or modeller or carver was a specialist in figures, he would seize any opportunity of introducing Cupids, men-in-armour, or pseudo-classical figures into his work; if he was more able at still-life, he would introduce decorative devices involving musical instruments, books, scrolls and other conventional motifs; but it was in flowers and vegetation that these craftsmen chiefly luxuriated. Tracery and filigree work of all kinds smothered the surfaces of fine woods and precious metals; gilded or marble knights in armour supported clock-faces, elaboration of every kind was welcomed, fussy ornament triumphed.

It is surprising to realize that new movements influenced, with such apparent ease, the apparently ingrained satisfaction—even of pride—with the accepted standards of home-making. At times the Japanese influence would make its appeal, and fans or bamboo screens would add vivacity to the more solid decoration of a room. Cushions and rugs, bed-spreads and curtains gave unlimited opportunities for experiment and adventure. Upholstery, tapestry and brocade, smothered with representations of birds, animals and plants were highly popular. Remains of the influence of the brothers Adam, whose furniture was ornamented with festoons and wreaths tied with ribbon, Chippendale's Chinese ornament and foliated scrolls, adaptations of Louis XVI settees—of walnut and mahogany—all these, decorated at the impulse of the designer with creations of his own fancy—incorporated every now and then with Greek or Roman mouldings—were to be found in British drawing-rooms. Fenders and fire-irons were available in a huge variety of riotous design.

But it is by the accessories that the Victorian home is chiefly remembered—the wool mats and lace antimacassars; the aspidistras in violently decorated bowls which rested on imitation marble pedestals; the palms and ferns in lighter bowls supported by bamboo tripod stands, the occasional tables or "whatnots" filled with knick-knacks, the gilt overmantel with its large mirror, the statuettes and wax fruit in glass cases—all the bits and pieces which harboured dust and must have been a housemaid's nightmare.

As if such a conglomeration of detail was insufficient, a dado of "Lincrusta," heavily embossed with a variety of patterns, or moulded into imitation panelling, would fill the lower portion of

the walls to a height of about four feet, and would also be used—whitewashed—as a substitute for ornamental plaster on ceilings.

In the hall or passage of the Victorian home—especially if its owner had—or wished to suggest—sporting interests, a stag's head, a stuffed fish in a glass case, or similar relic of the chase would be found. If the family were bird-lovers, a parrot or canary would be found in its elaborate gilded cage; the windows throughout the house were furnished with Venetian blinds, curtains of lace, and others of heavier material—such as velvet, plush, or brocade—all hung on rings from heavy cornice poles. In the best bedroom one always found a massive brass bedstead, its pillars surmounted by brass knobs which grew loose and rattled helplessly with the passing of the years.

It should not be forgotten that so much more time was spent at home by the family than it is to-day. Even in late-Victorian times there were few outdoor amusements, and the indoor amusements brought the family closer together than they were destined to be in later years. Their interests were shared more fully, father was still the head of the family, and around him the little world revolved.

It is illuminating to look through a Stores Catalogue of the period, and to study the designs of the furniture and accessories provided for the home. The lust for ornament and "decoration" is not only displayed in wallpapers, friezes, dadoes and ceilings, but spreads like a rash throughout the house. A "handsome" bureau implies a writing-desk in which leadlights are substituted for plain doors, in which the sides and shelves are carved in "graceful" shapes, and the handles are fanciful imitations of medieval designs. The armchairs are "improvements" on Chipendale; "Art" tapestry or "super-embossed velvet" covers the more expensive armchairs. One chair was described as "in quaint Art tapestry," the quaintness being supplied by horses pawing the air beneath a crown. An especially popular line was a suite in silk tapestry with rolled plush borders. Few of the couches or easy chairs offered any temptation to lounge.

"Ottomans" or Chesterfields were offered in a wide variety of incredible designs; and the more solid woods were rivalled by an assortment of wicker chairs stuffed with cretonne, tapestry and velvet; but it was on sideboards, cabinets and overmantels that the designer became most adventurous. The sideboards invariably contained bevelled-plate mirrors; carving or fretwork embellished

them, brass or copper handles added to their alleged quality. The cabinets luxuriated in mirrors, shelves, fretwork and other details of spurious Louis XV or Chippendale styles. The woodwork and the glass were titivated in innumerable ways, the main purpose evidently being to avoid anything approaching a straight line or simple curve; the wood was decked out with trelliswork or ornate moulding; beading and gimcrack patterns of all kinds were incorporated, the glass panels were garnished with incredibly curly woodwork, while particularly waggish invention was displayed in metal adornments.

"Exceptionally handsome carving" implied a riot of arabesques and excrescences which would have defied the wildest efforts of the wedding-cake designer. Overmantels gave the specialists in gaudy ornament their greatest licence. One untamed effort was advertised as "Something out of the Ordinary." It was. It defied description. Mahogany, walnut, rosewood, and whitewood were the raw materials of these craftsmen, with stamped metalwork and bevelled glass cut into "Art" shapes. Heraldic and "antique" patterns were combined with examples of every other fanciful experiment.

In bedroom furniture a similar spirit of adventure was evident. Although straight lines and formal shapes were accepted as a grim necessity in the main construction of wardrobes, washstands and dressing-tables, the designer found ample opportunity for his originality in panels, beading, pediments and bevelled plate glass. Banded veneer and inlays, fretted panels and friezes exercised his tricky mind; but his work was invariably overshadowed by the brass bedsteads which dominated the apartment. The aristocrat of all the Highest Quality bedsteads would be of solid brass with ornate knobs on the pillars. Some of these bedsteads were adaptations of the four-poster, for rods projected from the high rails at the back of the bed, and on these rods fringed curtains were draped, looped gracefully back to the rails by ribbon bows or cords. To those married couples who favoured the newfangled idea of twin beds, "The Connubial" was discreetly offered—two single brass beds placed side by side; for the bachelor, a combined bed-and-bookcase was available.

But the designer of furniture surely had many sad moments when he thought of his fellow-craftsmen who had the privilege of exercising their gifts in the decoration of larger surfaces, such as wallpapers, curtains and carpets. Carpet designers especially must

have filled him with envy, for this type of artist could riot in all the colours of the rainbow, in designs which were inspired by the looms of the Orient as well as those which came from his own fertile brain. Those Kidderminsters in "Art Colourings"—with their rose-cluster borders; those "Turkey" designs and floral sprays; those Mirzapores and Brussels, whose rowdy designs were also adapted to linoleums; those Axminsters which displayed their "High-Class Effects," were the pride of homes throughout the land.

It was ceaseless Competition that goaded designers to many of their excesses, for craftsmen in so many media concentrated their energies on the Home. The expert in brass and copper was not only concerned with vases and ornaments, picture-frames and other metalwork, but in hearth-furniture. Kerbs, fenders and fire-irons provided perpetual openings for extravagance: heavy brass was obviously as malleable as clay to these jugglers; it could be twisted into every conceivable shape—butchered to make a Victorian holiday. Hammered copper and "Armour Bright" competed with brass and iron, fire-irons and "dogs" became rustic or florid, metal flowers sprouted over fenders, pokers and tongs became playful, pretentious, or "tasteful." Tongs degenerated into "tongettes," more suitable for lifting sugar than coal; pokers were refined into "pokerettes," fragile little travesties which collapsed under the strain of their work; fire-screens added to the fun-and-games of the family hearth.

The materials mostly favoured for fire-screens were bevelled plate-glass in highly-burnished brass frames. Needless to say, the frames, the legs on which they stood, and their handles carried as much decoration as they could bear; but it was the plate-glass which bore the brunt of the artist's inspiration. For the glass was "richly decorated" with hand-painted designs, birds and flowers being the favourite subjects. "Roses in the very best style" were among the most irresistible attractions, but these were sometimes varied by figures and animals. Any adequate reference to the other accessories of the home would require a very ponderous volume. "Occasional tables," cake-stands, bowls and pots, china and glass, plaques and trinket-cabinets added to the collection of gewgaws; but the pedestals which supported the pots of palms, aspidistras or ferns refuse to be overlooked, even in the briefest commentary. For on these, the designer concentrated enthusiasm which sometimes developed into mania.

I have seen a pot fashioned into the shape of a swan, mounted on a "sea-wave" pedestal, and, from the body of the swan has emerged an aspidistra. Another pot and pedestal was so throttled with gaudy design that it threatened to run amok and choke the graceful palm which it supported. But if such solid objects as pots and pedestals were strangled with decoration, I can only ask you to imagine what happened to the flower-vases—the epergnes, tubes and stands which rested on mantelpieces, brackets and tables—the fancy glass and metal-ware knick-knacks and other frippery!

The Orient added its confusion and congestion to many Victorian homes. Indian brassware, Sandalwood novelties, Turkish embroideries, Japanese screens, Egyptian woodwork, Russian pokerwork were novelties for which the home had to find room. They were often introduced artfully to Stores customers by means of Bazaars and Far Eastern Fairs, in which the attendants were dressed in native costume, an additional air of glamour being introduced by the fragrant odour of Joss sticks. That was how Damascus pedestals and Cairo inlaid stools, carved Oriental screens and music-stands became dotted around Victorian drawing-rooms. Eastern embroideries were draped over pianotops, Japanese fans were displayed on walls, and Chinese figures—miniature models of mandarins with nodding heads, and an occasional Japanese sword—brought a hint of wild adventure into staid and secure lives.

A canary in a brass cage, a cat, and a dog were normal additions to the family circle; the dog would greet his master as the head of the house returned punctually every evening from his toil in the City, and hung his top-hat and overcoat on the hall-stand. From the wall opposite the stand, a stag's head would protrude, his eyes gazing fiercely at his owner—who would normally be welcomed far more cordially by his wife and family.

It is only fair to mention that the leading furnishing firms had already, towards the close of the Victorian era, begun to introduce a better feeling for design, and to remind the public that there was beauty in traditional styles which had been neglected. These firms established studios staffed by artists who could design Period rooms, and furnish them in appropriate styles. Their catalogues contained many charming reconstructions and adaptations of Charles II, Louis XVI, Tudor, Jacobean, English Renaissance, Georgian and Adam designs; their work influenced wealthier and

more adventurous clients; but the average suburban middle-class home possessed furniture which had been built to endure, and it was only the younger generation who could avail themselves of houses designed by accomplished domestic architects, and break away from the thralldom of the Antimacassar Age.

Early-Victorian family life was mostly lived in surroundings which had become established, and governed largely by a set programme and time-table—a programme which was only altered on festive or other social occasions. The authority for the conduct and organization of the Home was Mrs. Isabella Beeton, whose "Book of Household Management," first published in 1861, has maintained its pre-eminence until the present day, by means of innumerable revised editions. In the first edition, Mrs. Beeton explained that she was induced to undertake her work by realizing the discomfort and unhappiness caused by household mismanagement. From her opening chapter in the Second Edition, published in 1882, one can obtain a very vivid picture of the Victorian housewife and her responsibilities. The authoress emphasizes early rising as the first of the essential qualities; she next counsels frugality and economy, although the menus she discusses later in the book suggest, to modern minds, unbridled extravagance; she utters a warning about hastily-formed friendships, praises the virtues of hospitality, but reprimands tattling and careless conversation. "If the mistress be a wife," says Mrs. Beeton, "never let a word in connection with her husband's failings pass her lips"—a rather ominous inference that the Victorian husband was not always a paragon.

Charity and benevolence are touched upon. "It is almost fashionable for the well-to-do to spend some of their superfluous time in visiting their poorer neighbours. . . . There will be opportunities for advising and instructing them, in a pleasant, unobtrusive manner, in cleanliness, industry, cookery, good management and the rules of health." There is also fascinating advice on the engaging and treatment of servants, with a scale of wages—from which we learn that the wages of a Butler are from £60 to £80 per annum, a Footman (when found in livery) from £15 to £25, of a Page from £6 to £14, a Housekeeper ("with tea, sugar and beer, or allowance for same") from £18 to £45, descending to a General Servant at £10 to £16 per year. Mrs. Beeton reminds us that the number of servants must obviously be regulated by the scale of the master's income; and one obtains

a vivid impression of the cost of living in the "Eighties" by the statement that an income of about £1,000 a year would justify the employment of a Cook, Upper and Under Housemaid and Manservant, while in the £300-a-year home a Cook and Housemaid should suffice.

The mistress's duties are defined; they include the superintendence of the servants, attention to the children, arrangement of flowers, the making of simple clothes, and marketing—as a prelude to Luncheon, at which the children are present with their mother, as "many little vulgar habits and faults of speech and manner are avoided by this companionship." Visiting is the subject of special advice, with stress on one's conduct during ceremonial calls. The giving of a Dinner Party is dealt with fully—especially that trying "Half Hour before Dinner" in which the hostess is counselled to "display no kind of agitation, but show her tact in suggesting light and cheerful subjects of conversation, which will be much aided by the introduction of any particularly new book, curiosity of art, or article of vertu." As we have seen, curiosities of art abounded in the Victorian home.

Father enters Mrs. Beeton's picture only when dinner has been announced, for "he offers his arm to, and places at his right-hand at the table, the lady to whom he wishes to pay most respect." The rest of the party follow the host in prearranged order. Mrs. Beeton, evidently assuming that the dinner will be a great success, takes us on to the moment when "dessert is placed on the table, accompanied by finger-glasses. The hostess, whose behaviour will set the tone to all the ladies present, will merely wet the tips of her fingers. When fruit has been taken, and a glass or two of wine passed round, the hostess will rise. The gentlemen will rise at the same time, and all remain courteously standing until the last lady has withdrawn." The authoress adds this rather sad footnote: "In former times, when the bottle circulated freely amongst the guests, it was necessary for the ladies to retire earlier than they do at present, for the gentlemen soon became unfit to conduct themselves with that decorum which is essential to decent society."

Ball or Evening Party Etiquette receives special attention from Mrs. Beeton, and she utters a warning to her younger readers, that "introductions at balls or evening parties do not necessarily involve a subsequent acquaintanceship; no introduction at these times gives a gentleman a right to address a lady afterwards. She

is consequently free, the next morning, to pass her partner of the previous evening without the slightest recognition."

Concerning Evenings at Home, the authoress reminds us that "there is none pleasanter than in such recreative enjoyments as those which relax the mind from its severer duties, while they stimulate it with a gentle delight." Among these gentle delights, when young people are present, are included "music, light needlework, an occasional game, and reading aloud of some good standard work. A knowledge of polite literature may be thus obtained by the whole family, especially if the reader is able and willing to explain the more difficult passages."

A fascinating light is cast on the cost of living in the "'Eighties" by the lists of current prices of food and drink; from which I select a few examples. Rump Steaks, 1s. 2d. per lb.; Breast of Veal, 8d.; Shoulder of Mutton, 9d.; Leg of Lamb, 1s. 2d.; Leg of Pork, 8½d.; Oysters, 1s. to 3s. a doz.; Soles, 1s. to 2s. a lb.; Chickens, 2s. to 3s. each; Brussels Sprouts, 2d. to 4d. a lb.; Potatoes, 1d. a lb.; Oranges, from 4d. a doz.; Gooseberries, 4d. to 8d. a quart; Bacon (best), 11d. a lb.; Eggs, 1s. to 2s. a doz.

The prices of Wines and Spirits will also provoke a sigh of envy: Sherry, 24s. to 48s. a doz.; Claret, (St. Julienne) 18s. to 36s. a doz.; Champagne (Moët), 60s. to 84s. a doz.; Brandy (Three Star), 66s. per doz.; Whisky (good quality, 10 under proof), 36s. to 48s. a doz.; Gin, 30s. to 42s. a doz.; Bass, 4s. 6d. a doz.; Guinness, 4s. a doz.

When Mrs. Beeton compiled her first Book of Household Management, with its innumerable recipes, she can hardly have visualized the time when her simple directions for wise selection of food, with its cooking and serving, would present any difficulty or when one of her longer dinner menus would almost provoke tears; but her book provides many authentic pictures of an age which will never return. Her chapter on Domestic Servants is a study of an era when servitude was a profession, when Mrs. Beeton had to remind Masters and Mistresses that servants should be "treated like reasonable beings, making slight excuses for the shortcomings of human nature." But she insists on discipline. "A strict mistress is not necessarily a harsh one, and, for the sake of others, as well as herself, she should insist upon the daily duties of each servant being faithfully performed."

When one reads Mrs. Beeton's chapters on those duties to be performed by servants, from the butler downwards, the elaborate

rules which were expected to govern their behaviour, the obsequious politeness with which each duty had to be fulfilled, and the inference that the Master and Mistress were obviously superior beings, it is evident that domestic service in the Victorian era differed only in minor degrees from slavery, and that the social revolutions during the next fifty years were considerably overdue.

But although Britain's social structure has undergone such complete transformation, Victorian influences remain in many homes. The Aspidistra Age still flourishes in suburban and provincial windows, old family albums are still browsed over affectionately, and, while the younger people of to-day find side-whiskered great-grandpapas wildly funny, the older folk think and talk wistfully of their young days when life was so ordered and tranquil.

Alas! I do not share their wistfulness.

* * * * *

I remember my childhood surroundings quite clearly. In the parlour was a horsehair sofa, which was cold and slippery, and the bristles in which pierced my knickerbockers. The armchairs, as well as the sofa, were of horsehair. There was a thing called a Whatnot; every inch of it was carved, and on its four shelves were many little pieces of china. There was an ornamental occasional table on the top of which was a wool mat; and on the mat was the Family Bible—very heavy, and fastened with a clasp, as if it was very private. Round the fireplace were plush curtains edged with ball fringe; at the windows, more ball-fringed curtains, with others of cream lace. There was a big pedestal on which a plant stood in a big pot, a gas bracket with coloured globe on each side of the fireplace; and, on the mantelpiece, a wonderful gold-looking clock in a big glass case. Then there was a dining-table, and six chairs with horsehair seats.

I can also see, now, a big screen covered with a lot of pictures—some small, some large; a portrait of Queen Victoria, another group of the Royal family, some cricketers, and horses; they were coloured plates cut out of Summer and Christmas numbers of the *Illustrated London News*.

The pictures on the walls included a large oil painting of a frowning old man with side-whiskers and one hand resting on a big family Bible; and a picture of Wellington and Blucher at

Waterloo. Painted china plates hung on the wall, and an upright piano with crimson-pleated front, which was only opened on Sunday when my mother played hymns or serious songs. I still recollect singing, with the family:

"Oh, where is my boy to-night?
Oh, where is my boy to-night?
My heart o'erflows
For I love him, he knows,
Oh, where is my boy to-night?"

I never knew what happened to the wanderer about whom we sang so tearfully. Then there was another equally heartbreaking ballad, about a little flower girl:

"Underneath the gaslight's glitter
Stands a little fragile girl,
Heedless of the night-winds bitter
As they round about her whirl.
Tired and hungry, sad and weary,
In this careless world of ours,
Singing in the night so dreary
Won't you buy my pretty flowers?"

All the songs we sang were obviously designed to plunge us into the deepest gloom. Sundays were not days for smiling. But, now and then we put on our "Sunday Best" to do honour to a special occasion. Let me tell you of the greatest occasion of my younger days.

"LITTLE OLD LADY PASSING BY"

ON June 22nd, 1897, a little old lady drove through London. She was the central figure of a pageant which celebrated her Diamond Jubilee—the sixtieth anniversary of her reign as Queen of England.

She sat, a tiny figure, in a state landau drawn by eight horses—"gaily caparisoned creams." Princes of the Realm, representatives of her Empire and her Court, Indian rulers, famous statesmen and soldiers, rode with her beneath triumphal arches and along streets beflagged and decorated, from Buckingham Palace to Temple Bar and to St. Paul's, where the little old lady gave thanks, and massed choirs on the steps of the cathedral sang a Te Deum. Then to the Mansion House, through ecstatic crowds, across London Bridge, the Borough, St. George's Circus, and Westminster Bridge, to Buckingham Palace.

The whole of London and countless thousands of men, women and children from the Provinces had assembled to greet their Queen on this historic day; red, white and blue were seen everywhere, in rosettes, and streamers, ribbons and robes, flags and banners; throughout the journey the citizens of Britain and the Empire expressed their loyalty.

The Press, determined to do justice to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, surpassed themselves. The *Daily Mail*—then a little more than a year old—produced a special souvenir number, at the price of sixpence, printed throughout in gold. Glowing tributes were paid to the Mother of Empire—the little old lady who had been born seventy-eight years ago, who had ascended the throne at the age of eighteen, and during whose reign ten Prime Ministers had been in office—Melbourne, Peel, Russell, Derby, Aberdeen, Disraeli, Gladstone, Salisbury, Gladstone again, and Rosebery.

The vast Empire over which she reigned was also celebrating the great day; but, as the little figure in her state landau, drawn by those cream-coloured horses, bowed to her adoring subjects, pictures of a troubled past must have flashed through her mind. Several times she broke down, and tears rolled down her face as the Princess of Wales pressed her hand consolingly. For the little

old lady had known great grief and borne many sorrows. Wars had broken the peace for which she had prayed on the eve of her Coronation—wars in China, Afghanistan, Russia, India, Abyssinia, South Africa, the Transvaal, Egypt, and elsewhere. The Boer War was yet to be fought and to cloud the final years of her reign.

But the greatest of all the Queen's sorrows was the death of her beloved husband, the Prince Consort, in 1861. She had mourned his loss for thirty-six years; but she had never neglected what she regarded as her solemn duty as Queen, or forgotten that her Crown was the living symbol which held her Empire together. In the words of a writer who recorded her achievements, "Her wisdom, her knowledge of politics, her unselfishness and uprightness, were all remarkable traits of her long reign. No sovereign was ever so revered by her subjects."

The little old lady was rewarded on her Diamond Jubilee day with "Queen's weather." The sun shone brilliantly throughout the day, the organization of the procession was perfect, and the people revelled in the beauty of the pageant, which symbolized a unique day in Britain's history. From the moment when the guns boomed out in a Royal salute to announce that the Queen had left Buckingham Palace to commence her journey to St. Paul's, everything combined to add lustre to the occasion.

The crowds were thrilled to see many of the great figures who had contributed to the glories of the Queen's reign. Lord Roberts headed the procession of Colonial mounted troops, who were followed by the Premiers of Canada and South Africa, each with a contingent of soldiers. Native warriors from Cyprus, Borneo, the Straits Settlements, West India, the Gold Coast and other corners of the Empire were followed by contingents from the Navy, and men of the Guards and other famous regiments, with their bands playing triumphal marches.

Then came a group of aide-de-camps, of field-m Marshals and other distinguished officers, high officials of the Court, ambassadors and princes, with naval and military representatives of every country in the world. The dramatic climax to the splendour of this jewelled cavalcade was heralded by the ladies of the royal family, including the Queen's widowed daughters, who for this great occasion had discarded their mourning and wore white. Sixteen of these carriages passed, before the bodyguard of Her Majesty came into view, followed by a procession of forty royal princes, and an Indian cavalry escort led by Lord Wolseley.



QUEEN VICTORIA'S
DIAMOND JUBILEE,
1897.

The Scene outside St. Paul's Cathedral.



A LINES 10-11-12



A FASHION 10-11-12

(From The Illustrated London News)

DIAMOND JUBILEE FASHIONS

[To face page 27

At last, in a carriage drawn by eight cream-coloured horses—the little old lady herself, in a dress of grey, covered with black lace. She carried a grey parasol. With her in the carriage were the Princess of Wales and Princess Christian. Riding on either side of her were the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cambridge, and, to complete the procession, an escort of Life Guards and Royal Horse Guards.

The sooty London streets were transformed with garlands draped on decorated pillars, the buildings were festooned with flags, shields and other emblems. The crowd cheered every figure they recognized, and many they didn't—the Maoris, Sikhs, Dyaks and Chinese, all of whom were devoted soldiers of the Empire. But the little old lady in the old-fashioned bonnet received the most rapturous cheers of all throughout her journey—cheers which were only hushed as she sat in her carriage outside St. Paul's, waiting to join the massed choirs and bands in the service of Thanksgiving. Before she left Buckingham Palace she had sent a message to every part of her Empire:

"From my heart I thank my beloved People. May God bless them.

V.R. and I."

Before that day was ended, the little old lady had realized, once again, how beloved she was by her myriad subjects. For that day symbolized her rule of over one-quarter of the habitable globe, representing every race and religion. The past and the present were represented among the spectators; among the men who applauded from a window in Fleet Street were the survivors of the Balaclava Charge, one of whom had travelled 4,000 miles to salute his Queen.

While Britain rejoiced, celebrations were being held in every city of the Empire, in the United States, and in many capitals of Europe. The mother from the East End of London who had trudged in the early hours of the morning to the West End, with a "Jubilee baby" in her arms, was expressing her loyalty at the same time as a negro woman and her piccaninny was celebrating the great day in British Africa. The cavalcade ended with a deputation of officers of the Queen's Prussian Dragoon Guards—with two sons of Bismarck in their ranks.

The little old lady was spared the horror of foreseeing that, a few years after her long life had ended, the nation whom those

proud Prussians represented was to provoke a long war against Britain.

* * * * *

As one of Queen Victoria's humblest subjects, I saw that procession from the window of a ham-and-beef shop in the Borough, seats in which (for our family) had, I am sure, cost my father far more than his week's salary. From that window we were to witness an episode which might have had tragic consequences. The massed bands and the deafening cheers which accompanied the Queen's progress were a sore trial to the spirited horses which were so fascinating a feature of the procession; and when the carriage of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the Premier of Canada, arrived outside our window on the route, his horses suddenly took fright, got out of control, and started to kick his carriage to pieces. There were dramatic moments before Sir Wilfrid and Lady Laurier could be rescued, the horses and the broken carriage removed from the mêlée, and the procession continued.

That procession marked the end of an epoch. Another little old lady, who still lives, has lent me some of her treasures which have enabled me to recapture my memories of that day. Among the carefully-preserved souvenirs before me are that Golden Extra of the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Graphic* Diamond Day Edition.

The *Daily Mail* was, I remember, regarded as a somewhat wild and adventurous intruder into London journalism, but nothing could be more decorous and dignified than this Souvenir number, or an ordinary edition, published three months after the Jubilee, which is before me. Scare headlines and the heavy display types to which we are accustomed in most of to-day's newspapers were entirely absent. The pages were admirably illustrated by line drawings, the most remarkable in the Golden Extra being a full-page panorama drawn from the Ball of St. Paul's—a most dexterous and elaborate picture which would be regarded as a triumph of illustration to-day.

The *Daily Graphic* Diamond Day Edition gives even more striking evidence of the ability of Press artists nearly fifty years ago. Those were the days, it should be remembered, before photographs could be reproduced and printed in daily newspapers; the Press had not yet experimented with coarse-screen half-tone blocks, and news illustrations which are now "covered" by the Press photographer had to be *drawn*, in pen and ink.

The *Daily Graphic* staff artists were unique in their ability; they

were apparently oblivious of the limitations of the pen, and were quite capable of tackling the most elaborate subjects, with the speed demanded by topical journalism. They appeared to see no difficulty in drawing the bewildering pageantry of the Jubilee; there was a vigour and individuality in their work which no Press photograph could equal, and I would like to pay my very belated tribute to Oliver Paque, Kemp-Tebby, Douglas Macpherson, Reginald Cleaver, H. W. Brewer, Sydney Higham, T. S. C. Crowther, and G. K. Jones, whose work looks as fresh and lively to-day as it did when it appeared in the *Daily Graphic* of June 23rd, 1897. Certainly the artists of that period must have given great pleasure to the little old lady who reigned with such homely dignity over a very great Empire.

The Jubilee inspired the controllers of London's centres of amusement to produce exceptional programmes. Earls Court devoted its fifteen acres of exhibition buildings, its delightful gardens, its many bands, and other resources, to the presentation of a Victorian Era Exhibition which illustrated every phase of the Queen's Sixty Years—its art, drama, music, science, sport, commerce and notable events. At Wembley Park there were Jubilee Celebrations, with illuminations; at the Royal Aquarium a gigantic series of Jubilee Tableaux picturing the life of the Queen since her Accession; at the Crystal Palace there was the Imperial Victorian Exhibition, which included a Flower Show comprising all the flowers and plants introduced during the Queen's reign—and, as sideshows, a display by Sandow, the Monarch of Muscle, and Wombwell's Menagerie. As the supreme attraction, Brock's Fireworks included a great National Set-Piece with the Queen's Portrait, festoons of Jewels, and a giant Patriotic device, 250 feet in circumference.

The Palace will always be memorable, to the millions who knew it, as the home of the Handel Festivals and other musical events on the grand scale, as the centre of Exhibitions and of a great variety of indoor and outdoor entertainments; but, above all, for Brock's Fireworks. The introduction of these wonderful pyrotechnic displays dated from the year 1865, when 20,000 people gave the inauguration a wild welcome. They continued to be the outstanding feature of the Palace programmes until 1910, and were again revived in 1920.

These Brock displays developed pyrotechny to an Art. Pictures in fire of battles, bombardments and sieges; set-pieces which

portrayed such incidents as the eruption of Vesuvius; portraits of celebrities, the representation of famous buildings; patriotic and topical devices of all kinds—succeeded in providing constantly varied entertainment, which enchanted Palace visitors until the building itself was destroyed by fire; a tragedy for which Mr. Brock was not in the remotest way responsible.

* * * * *

We were not aware of the fact, but while we watched the passing of the Queen's Jubilee procession we were also witnessing the passing of an era. Those ladies with parasols and picture hats, whose corsetted figures were a riot of chiffon and *crêpe de Chine*, of ruches, ribbons and ruffles, were soon to adopt less elaborate fashions; their attendant males were to discard their tall, stiff collars, their top-hats and frock coats and adopt far less formal attire.

The older folk were destined to frown a good deal in the early years of the twentieth century. Their lives were being changed—had already been altered. It was too late to put the clock back. The sofas and armchairs would soon seem to be less comfortable; the newspapers less pleasant to read. Horses and bicycles were to be supplanted by motor cars; people would soon be able to *fly*. There was restlessness everywhere. The piano and musical-box were already being neglected, and a wheezy gramophone was taking their place; mother and father were addressed casually as *Mater* and *Pater*; the daughters disliked domestic work and were beginning to find jobs in the City; and the minxes were mixing with men *far* too freely!

The upper classes and the comfortable middle classes were about to realize that servants and the working-classes were not satisfied with their subservience. The spread of Education had produced some highly intelligent and forceful representatives of the ranks of Labour, and they were not prepared to submit to the injustices which they saw all around them. The Unemployed were to be the subject of legislation instead of being recipients of charity. Consciousness of poverty and the need for dealing with it by legislation had invaded the Victorian drawing-room. Employers were being reminded that the wages which they paid would certainly not provide comfort and security for their staffs or domestic servants.

Yes; the world was changing before the eyes of those older folk.

To-morrow was already knocking peremptorily on the doors of Victorian homes. Moving Pictures were being exhibited! The first Animated Photograph had been projected, in Philadelphia, as early as 1870; Edison's "Kinetoscope" had attracted vast crowds to the Chicago World's Fair in 1893; but it was Robert W. Paul, a scientific instrument maker, who, in his Hatton Garden workshops, developed the idea of the "Kinetoscope," and electrified the public by showing on a screen at the Alhambra Theatre, London, the Derby of 1896, which he re-ran before their eyes twenty-four hours after the race at Epsom. Paul, later, produced his first film love-story. The Cinema was born!

But those Victorians to whom life was real and life was earnest, had far more serious matters to consider. The newspapers on which they relied seemed to be losing their dignity; those people abroad were becoming increasingly impudent—that ridiculous Kaiser needed a good straight talking-to. The stern Victorian parent was already losing his authority as lord and master. The Moulton Barretts were no longer treated with awe and deference; the youngsters saw no reason for respecting age—if age was made an excuse for bullying.

And so, the mothers and fathers would console each other with their age-old views on the struggle between age and youth. "These youngsters are going to the dogs!" father would assert. "They think of nothing but gadding about! Restless—empty-headed—blindly selfish—refuse to take life seriously." And yet those apparently deplorable youngsters were destined to save their elders, in three wars, and to prove that, beneath the effervescence and high spirits of youth were ideals, strengthened in an emergency by unsurpassed courage.

They were to be tested very soon. Something more ominous than social change was beginning to cast a cloud over Victorian lives; social preoccupations were to be interrupted by a cloud which burst suddenly on October 10th, 1899. For five years we had been aware of trouble in South Africa, of agitations, negotiations and problems which it was surely the job of our statesmen to handle while we got on with *our* jobs. Something went wrong. The Boers had struck suddenly. We were at War.

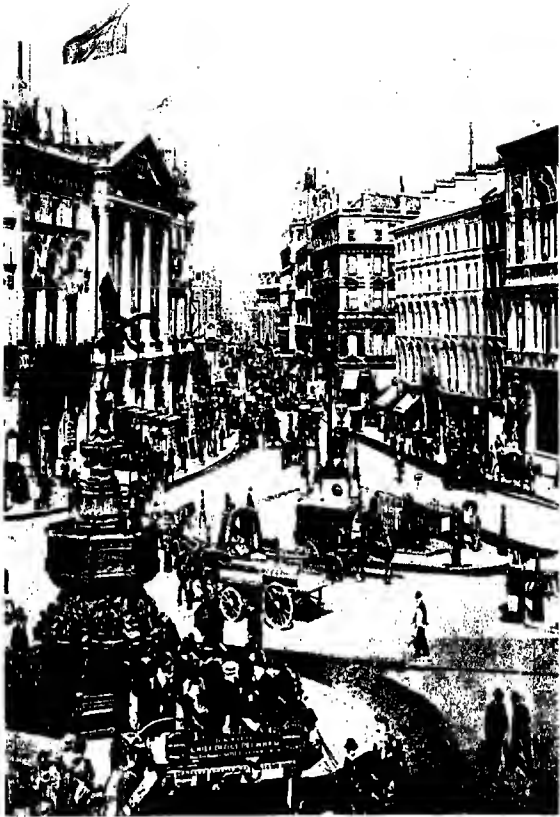
Before I discuss that War, let me try to show you what London looked like in those days, the London that was to read, with growing concern, of the adventures of its citizen-soldiers who had joined the ranks of our army.

THE BEGINNING OF THE CENTURY

ACROSS London Bridge, in three lines of horse-drawn traffic streamed a mass of private carriages, broughams and landaus, vans, dust-carts and coal-carts, buses, lorries piled high with the produce of Smithfield, Covent Garden, or Billingsgate, carts of all shapes and sizes; drivers of smart hansoms chafing at traffic blocks and exchanging fruity remarks with other drivers who were alleged to be fast asleep on the road, or offering to relieve a brewer's dray of some of his excess luggage. The two-horse 'buses with passengers sitting side by side on the double row of seats which divided the top-deck, and which they reached by curling staircases—were much smaller than the motor buses of to-day; but there were even greater contrasts between yesterday and to-day in the pedestrians.

For, in the City, most of the men above the status of a clerk wore top-hats, the clerks wore bowlers (or straw hats, in the summer); only the "working-classes" wore caps. All the men of the upper and middle classes wore formal black clothes; to the older men, the frock coat and top-hat were essential, and the neckwear alternated between very tall "military" stiff collars or those with sharp wings disclosing an Adam's apple. Few if any women were seen in the City, for girls had not yet emerged from the suburbs to become typists, clerks and secretaries, and town and country ladies only came to London for shopping, their haunts being Bond Street, Oxford Street, Regent Street, and further west. These ladies in corsetted figures, and with bustles beneath their full skirts which swept the pavements, were usually accompanied by patient top-hatted males.

"Carriage-folk" would be driven to the shops they wished to patronize, stepping, in the summer, from open landaus and closing their parasols as they crossed the pavement. These ladies wore large picture-hats, billowing dresses with huge shoulder-of-mutton sleeves, and wide sweeping skirts beneath which were an array of petticoats. At Lords, or in the Row, parasols and picture-hats, silk toppers and frock coats were the only possible wear, unless one was to be dismissed as an ignorant bounder. To quote



PICCADILLY CIRCUS, 1910.

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a descriptive writer of the period: "In the Drive and Rotten Row, Society can be seen taking the air. In the former are unbroken lines of sumptuous equipages drawn by the finest coach-horses money can purchase, and occupied by some of the best-dressed and most beautiful women in the world, who drive there at stated hours. In the Row are to be seen those from the same ranks of Society who prefer horse exercise, the ground being carefully laid down in tan and gravel, for their use."

Cycling was, however, already becoming a rival of those "sumptuous equipages," and Rotten Row was soon to be deserted by riders who preferred cycling in Battersea Park. Scores of the younger ladies and gentlemen of the Upper Classes could be counted on any fine morning, cycling at Battersea; but how the ladies cycled—in picture-hats and voluminous skirts remains a mystery. The older members of Society looked with haughty disfavour on those undignified youngsters who could possibly prefer a ridiculous bicycle to an open landau with smart liveried coachman, and the footman to spring down from his box-seat to open the door for my lady. The world was surely turning topsy-turvy? It was.

There was a world outside the Park which was even less conventional than those cycling daughters. In Piccadilly Circus, Mr. Alfred Gilbert's graceful Eros aimed his shaft towards the not so demure ladies who flaunted their charms before the bucks and blades who patronized the long bar at the Criterion, the "Pav.," the Monico, and a host of other male and female rendezvous. It was a pleasant, carefree world to live in, for those who had enough money to enjoy it; and money went much further then. Not until 1914 was Income Tax to be increased to the "ruinous" rate of 1s. 4d. in the pound.

Clothes, food, rent, travel, amusement, all the necessities or luxuries of life were infinitely cheaper than they are to-day. You could buy passably good wine for 2s. 6d. a bottle. Whisky was less than 4s. a bottle. Standard brands of tobacco 4½d. an ounce, cigarettes 2½d. for ten. A sovereign was a coin which lasted a young man very much longer than the £1 note of to-day. It had to; for many of those top-hatted gentlemen who travelled to the City from their comfortable suburban homes had to keep a wife and family in comfort, educate their children well, and make provision for any evil days that might come along, all on an income of £5 a week. And they did it, because the cost of living

was less, and money was worth at least four times as much as it is to-day.

I was educated at a Secondary school—Aske's—the fees being £3 3s. a term. I was fairly successful at most studies, except Euclid—the meaning and purpose of which eluded me completely. I only managed to tackle the subject for the Cambridge Local Examinations, by committing Euclid's first two infuriating books to memory. I managed to pass the exams, with distinctions in Languages, but failed in Drawing—which was destined to be my career.

When my schooldays were over, I found my first job, in an Advertising Agency, at a salary of 8s. a week. Even on that salary—with occasional loans from my parents, I was not conscious of penury. Occasionally, indeed, when I had been in the City for a year or two, I would indulge in an Evening in Town! There were several little French restaurants in Soho where the cost of a table d'hôte Dinner was 1s. 6d., and a half bottle of Vin Ordinaire was 1s. Half a crown was the price of a pit seat in any London theatre, but I often patronized the gallery. For 1s. I've spent an evening with some of the greatest actors who ever trod the stage; and had a riotous night in Town—dinner, a music hall, and even bought a drink for an irresistible lady of the Promenade, for a total inclusive cost of 10s.

Because these nights in Town were so infrequent, they were all the more enjoyable. Suburbia was content, then, with its musical evenings, amateur theatricals, dances, whist drives, its tennis, cricket or football, cycling or athletic clubs. At dances we always wore white kid gloves, our white ties were fastened to our tall upright collars with invisible clips, and we carried little dance programmes, with pencils attached, with which we noted the Polkas, Waltzes, Barn Dances, Quadrilles and Lancers we had booked with the ladies of our choice. It seemed a busy, happy enough life, and we were blissfully unaware that the Future would offer us entertainment for every waking hour. The motor car was yet to be born, there were no cinemas, no B.B.C., no aeroplanes. But they were all waiting—just round the corner.

My early days in the City saw the beginning of many social revolutions. Joseph Lyons, abandoning his career as an artist, had decided that the Victorian teashop was ripe for improvement—that its solid fare and stolid service lacked imagination. So he established a white and gold teashop on the corner of

Ludgate Circus, which provided daintier, more inviting menus and much more alluring service.

He engaged young and pretty waitresses, dressed them in smart uniforms with frilled aprons and caps, introduced a variety of French rolls, pastries and tempting dishes and served them on better china. Of course, we revelled in the novelty of waitresses who looked like Gaiety girls, the freshness and lightness of the surroundings, and the substitution of *batons*, *galettes* and French pastries for the very familiar household bread and bath buns. That teashop in Ludgate Hill was the beginning of the biggest catering organization in the world. It was followed by the opening of scores of shops in London and the provinces, by the establishment of Corner Houses, the Trocadero, the building of hotels.

An inevitable accompaniment of my Sundays in those days was the *Referee*. It was filled with the theatrical news which I loved, with a page of "Mustard and Cress" by "Dagonet" (George R. Sims), and other features, the most fascinating of which was a column of Paris gossip by John Raphael, a correspondent with a brilliantly light touch. I still think with gratitude of his charming weekly chats, interspersed so naturally with his "Qu'est ce que vous voulez que je vous dise, moi?" and other pleasantries of the Gay City. I lost a friend when Raphael died, when "Mustard and Cress" withered, and the *Referee* itself passed away.

I had decided soon after my entry into the City, that my future, as a clerk in an Advertising Agency, would be very bleak. I had developed the wild ambition of being an artist, and spent five evenings a week—after the day's work—at Art Schools. I wanted to become an illustrator, new periodicals were being published every week by the new "lions" of Fleet Street—Harmsworth, Pearson and Newnes—and I had already sold a drawing to the *Boy's Own Paper*. Obviously the first essential to future success was that I should improve my drawing; so I worked, during the next few years, at a succession of Art Schools.

My first was at the Birkbeck Institute, a hive of assorted educational activity, which always smelt strongly of disinfectant. It was within walking distance of the agency in which I spent my unrewarded days. When I left that agency—parting from them over a little matter of salary—to begin my hazardous career as an illustrator, I began to study in the evenings at the Goldsmiths' Institute which was near my home, and afterwards transferred to Lambeth, from which many well-known illustrators had emerged.

I recall my days at Lambeth far more vividly than those of any of my other schools. We were left to work out our own salvations rather than dragooned into becoming painters, and I'm very grateful to the head teacher, Innes Fripp, who helped me so greatly. One summer evening, instead of playing tennis or some other game, I travelled to Kennington and entered that old life room with its warm stuffy smell of oil paint, old canvasses, turpentine—and dust. Our studies from the nude model were suddenly interrupted. I noticed that the girl who was posing for us had begun to sway and droop; she was obviously feeling faint, and a moment afterwards crashed forward on to an elderly short-sighted student whose easel was within a foot of the model throne. One or two of us rushed forward, laid her on the model throne, covered her with drapery, gave her water, and then, while she was resting, decided to find her address, and get into touch with her family. Fortunately we found, from the office, that she lived in the neighbourhood, and one of the men went round to her house and brought her sister back. I shall never forget her horror when she found that her sister had been posing in the nude—before a roomful of men! Apparently the model had kept this detail a secret from her rigidly puritanical family; and we never saw her again.

All my days were absorbed in trying to make a living in Fleet Street. Fortunately for me, it was a period of great enterprise and expansion in the publishing world; new illustrated magazines were launched almost every week. Still more fortunately, the *Boy's Own Paper* continued to be a very good friend to me; but I was mystified as to how people ever made enough money to launch new papers, to occupy vast offices, to control huge staffs. I was just a struggling young illustrator, a one-man business in this busy market-place and rapidly developing world.

Methods of reproducing and printing drawings had already been revolutionized since I had started in Fleet Street. All around me were signs of bewildering change. The pace was quickening. We were not conscious that we needed Speed to give an added zest and excitement to life, but Speed was being prepared for us. In 1895 the first exhibition of Automobiles in Great Britain had been held. In 1896, an Act was passed which permitted motorists to drive motor vehicles along the public highways without being preceded by a man with a red flag. In 1902, Mr. S. F. Edge established a record of 34 miles an hour, but the authorities were

determined to put a stop to such dangerous exploits, for in 1903 a Motor Car Act enforced the registration of cars, the licensing of drivers, and a speed limit of 20 miles an hour, with further authority by Local Government Boards to reduce that maximum speed and prohibit cars from any roads it might schedule.

The appearance of the early motor cars hardly seemed to suggest a possibility of reaching the maximum speed limit. They were of monstrously ugly design, without wind-screen or other protection, entirely open to the elements; and I have a sad memory of being driven from Birmingham to London through torrential rain, of sitting in a pool of water which streamed down the back and sides of the car, and of arriving with my souwester, goggles and mackintosh soaked through. The roads of those days were unmade, so every driver had to wear goggles and coats to protect him from the clouds of dust, women passengers covered their heads in veils, and the motor car had a very uphill fight for popularity.

The Aeroplane was still a very experimental "flying machine." In 1896, one of these crazy inventions had actually flown half a mile—men had met their deaths trying to produce gliders. In 1905, two French inventors tried new machines in Paris, one of the pioneers falling into the Seine. The world had to wait for Bleriot to fly the Channel—and introduce a new method of transport—a new and terrible instrument of War.

As my thoughts drift backwards I catch occasional vivid glimpses of the Victorian scene; of summer days when, from dark and shabby Ludgate Hill Station (which always smelt of the cooking from Spiers and Pond's kitchens) I started my journeys along Fleet Street and the Strand. with a bulging portfolio. Very close to the station was Ludgate Arcade, where, in a little barber's shop, "Arthur" cut my hair; he still cuts it, after more than forty years, though Ludgate Arcade was wrecked during an air-raid in the World War.

In my young days, men in straw boaters or silk top-hats thronged the pavements of the "Street of Ink," which was filled with horse traffic and added a smell of the stables to the all-pervading printing ink; scavenger boys dived in and out perilously among the horses, trying to keep the thoroughfare clean; newspaper boys rushed shouting from side streets, with their contents bills and arms full of "Extry Speshuls!" But, the pace of the pedestrian was much more leisurely than it is to-day. Some of the

'bus and hansom drivers wore grey toppers, and the roofs of the smarter hansoms were covered with clean linen summer canopies.

Small sausage-and-mash shops, where sausages and onions were perpetually sizzling in the windows, did not add to the attractions of Fleet Street on a hot summer day; but I always lingered at another window where the original drawings for the weekly journal, *Black and White* were on view. I would make my way along the Strand; the Gaiety Bar would always be filled with sportsmen and stage people, and I would often see the great Phil May wearing a loud black-and-white check suit, and a grey bowler, standing at the entrance to Romanos. But such haunts were not for me; there was little leisure in my life; I was ceaselessly busy, drawing and trying to sell my wares.

As I watch half a century pass by, I try to study the changing panorama in ordered sequence; but isolated pictures insist on catching my eye. I see the Victorian Upper Classes who worked far too little, and the Lower Classes who worked far too much; there seemed to be so many men of leisure with nothing to occupy their days and nights but sport, amusements, the Club, the boxing-ring, and the racecourse, while the lower classes struggled for a mere existence. Quaint fashions invade my thoughts—the days when women first struggled for Votes—the years of the Great War—and the troubles that followed. I see glimpses of women entering Sport—cycling, playing golf, cricket and tennis, dressed in long full skirts and picture-hats; I see the last horse-bus making its journey in 1911; and, in the following year, the Suffragettes—their window-smashing, for which they went quite cheerfully to prison, their banners planted on the top of the Monument—the woman who threw herself in front of the King's horse, "Anmer," at the Derby, and who died as the result of her injuries.

But my memory is leaping ahead too fast. I must return to the Boer War, which was the background of our lives at the close of the last century and the beginning of this.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR

THE three wars through which I have lived—the South African, the Great War, and the World War, seem to me to have followed the same general pattern, although they were so vastly different in detail, character and scope. In each War there was a long period of shocks to our national pride, of grave disappointment with the conduct of campaigns, of changes in political and military leadership, of stoical endurance by our fighting men and their families at home.

You may possibly ask how we became involved in the Boer War. You have perhaps been told that it was a blatant demonstration of Imperialism and the Jingo spirit; there was, I remember, a good deal of argument as to how the trouble started; there were furious denunciations of the Jameson Raid, which was cited as the cause of all the trouble. But the nation as a whole was convinced that our cause was just, that we had to go to war to protect the interests of the "Uitlanders"—mostly British subjects—who were deprived of all political rights in the Transvaal. There were notable exceptions to this view, who were labelled "Pro-Boers"; among them was Lloyd George, who was so highly unpopular that, on one occasion, he had to escape from a political meeting at Birmingham disguised as a policeman.

Before the quarrel between Britain and South Africa could be settled by arbitration, the Boers invaded the British Colonies, General French's and General White's names came into the newspaper headlines, and that of the Boer general, Joubert, who promptly defeated White and forced him to retreat to Ladysmith with the remnant of his shattered forces. Kimberley and Mafeking were also besieged, and the main interest of the war, to the anxious stay-at-home Briton, was concentrated on our efforts to relieve these beleaguered towns.

Three other British Generals—Buller, Methuen and Gatacre—commanded the biggest armies we had ever sent overseas; they met with disaster; grim battles at Modder River, and Magersfontein led to the "Black Week" when our misfortunes reached their climax in the defeat of Buller's army at Colenso. Then Lord

Roberts was appointed Commander-in-Chief, with Kitchener as his Chief-of-Staff; new armies were sent out to South Africa; yeomen and volunteers swarmed to the recruiting stations; and eventually "Bobs" and his forces achieved the victory for which we had long waited.

The war had been brought close to me when I saw my older brother Bart, and two cousins, off to South Africa in a crowded troopship. Bart, who had become the swashbuckler of our family, had lost no time in throwing up his job in the City, and volunteering. Less than three weeks after he had joined a London Rifle Brigade and thrown himself ardently into the drills, he was called up to report at Aldershot for service overseas.

He arrived at Waterloo to find hundreds of other volunteers, in their civilian clothes, waiting on a platform. His martial ardour was shocked to see this crowd of men with nobody in charge of them and looking so unlike the disciplined soldier he had already become. So, pulling himself to his full height of five-feet six, and striding fiercely along the platform, he shouted an order to "Fall in!"

In five minutes those men were in ranks, standing to attention, and as Bart walked up and down fixing them with the eyes of a martinet, two regimental sergeant-majors arrived. Finding part of their work already done, they at once realized that Bart was no "raw rookie," and asked him for details of his military career. When my highly imaginative brother had substituted, for his three weeks' training, a picture which suggested a lifetime of experience in the army, the sergeant-majors insisted on his travelling with them to Aldershot.

Within a day of his arrival he was appointed a regimental sergeant-major; but I grieve to say that his swashbuckling was his undoing. He left for South Africa as a corporal, and emerged unscathed from the campaign; but he never returned again to his old humdrum job in the City and embarked on a very adventurous life in Africa and Australia, until he again returned, still with a glint in his eye, to fight in the Great War.

* * * * *

Bart had sailed for South Africa with thousands of other young volunteers of the period, to fight what they had assumed to be an uneducated, truculent band of Dutch farmers, led by an old "bible-puncher," Paul Kruger, who believed himself to be under

divine guidance—a delusion which was also to sustain two later megalomaniacs. But Kruger—"Oom Paul"—differed totally from either the Kaiser or Hitler; he was puritanical, and narrow—an outstandingly ugly old man whose whiskered face, ancient top-hat and frock-coat, decorated with a sash which suggested that he was a member of the Ancient Order of Buffaloes, were gifts to the caricaturists of the period. But he was President of the South African Republic. And he defied the British Empire!

Britain was destined to receive many very rude shocks from this stern old puritan and those stubborn descendants of Dutch peasants whom he ruled; for they happened to know every inch of the veldt and kopje over which we decided to fight, they were inured to the climate, and inflamed with the righteousness of their cause. Our best generals, our finest soldiers, and the brave volunteers of the "C.I.V." were hopelessly outmanœuvred; and the British public had to face months of increasingly bad news. Ladysmith was besieged, and Mafeking, a little village which was defended by Colonel Baden-Powell, gave us such a dramatic story of courage and of privation borne with a smile that, when it was relieved, London went mad with joy. It was the only bit of good news that we had received after many months of campaigning, and dire losses from battle and disease. British generals had fought in vain, one after another had failed, until Lord Roberts, the redoubtable "Bobs," went out and turned defeat into victory.

The City of London Imperial Volunteers had sprung into existence at the country's call after General Buller had been defeated by the Boers at Colenso. Each man who left his office desk and enrolled was admitted a Freeman of the City of London. The "C.I.V.'s" saw service in South Africa early in 1900, fought at Paardeburg, Johannesburg, Diamond Hill and elsewhere, and returned to London to receive a tumultuous welcome from their very proud fellow-citizens.

Our first success was the defeat and capture of the Boer general, Cronje; then, after fierce fighting, Buller relieved Ladysmith; Bloemfontein surrendered to "Bobs"; enteric fever decimated our ranks, but at length Johannesburg, Pretoria and other towns were captured. Still Mafeking held out, reduced to rations of horseflesh and mouldy biscuits. At length it was relieved, Britain went crazy with joy, and Baden-Powell became a national hero. Mafeking Night in London will always hold its place in our history.

There was never such an orgy of delirium; all social codes were thrown aside; every class joined in the celebrations; duchesses forgot their dignity and shared their joy with the crowds who swarmed into and over their carriages; the police made no attempt to keep order. London was a pandemonium: the long months of anxiety were over. "Kruger's Whiskers"—streamers of red, white and blue paper on the end of a stick—were thrust into dignified faces by Members of Parliament; enormous, frenzied crowds gathered at the Stock Exchange, Mansion House, Trafalgar Square and Piccadilly Circus. Britain had at last taught those Dutch farmers that it didn't pay to pull the lion's tail! *Victory*—celebrated with squirts and squeakers, rattles and riot.

But the war dragged on for two years after that unforgettable night. De Wet and his Boers were not beaten yet, and they settled down to months of guerrilla fighting interspersed with many major battles; Kitchener took over, the mobility of the Boers was a constant problem which baffled all recognized methods of warfare; but, through success and disaster, Kitchener steadily wore down the enemy until finally they began to discuss peace terms, which were eventually signed at Pretoria in 1902.

"Bobs," Kruger, the "C.I.V.'s," Mafeking Night, "The Absent-Minded Beggar," and G. W. Stevens, are a conglomeration of words that will merely mystify my younger readers; but they will conjure up vivid pictures to the men and women who lived through the Boer War.

George W. Stevens was the *Daily Mail's* chief war correspondent. He sent brilliant dispatches from South Africa, and I still remember his uncannily vivid picture of a hospital tent during an operation. The smell of iodoform impregnated the pages of the *Mail* on that day; everything he wrote had a unique quality, and it was a tragic loss to journalism when he died, at the age of 31, from enteric, during the siege of Ladysmith. He left a series of books in which his dispatches had been republished, and if you want to realize why I still remember him with admiration and gratitude, try to get his "From Capetown to Ladysmith" (1900).

"The Absent-Minded Beggar" was Kipling's most widely-known contribution to the Boer War. It was commissioned by the *Daily Mail* as a stimulus to recruiting and as a means of collecting subscriptions to War funds. Set to a jingling tune by



MAFEKING NIGHT, PICCADILLY.

18th May, 1900.

Inset: Sketch of Boer General Piet Cronje.

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Sir Arthur Sullivan, it was sold in millions. If I were challenged, I could sing that chorus now:

“Cook’s son, duke’s son, son of a belted earl,
Son of a Lambeth publican—it’s all the same to-day!
Each of them doing his Country’s work!
Who’s to look after his girl?
Pass the hat, for your credit’s sake,
And PAY! PAY! PAY!”

It was a “potboiler” of the frankest type, but it echoed round the country. Kipling or Sullivan would not wish to be remembered by this example of their art; but they must have been comforted by the immense sums which it contributed to the funds for which it was written. There were many other popular songs of that period, the choruses of which are still sung lustily at festive gatherings, for their tunes are haunting, though their blatantly patriotic appeal and martial ardour belong to a vanished world. Those Boer War songs included “Soldiers of the Queen,” “Sons of the Sea,” “Dolly Gray,” “Bravo, Dublin Fusiliers,” and that incredible ballad “The Boers have got my Daddy.”

There were many days when we were in no mood for singing. The Boer War cost Britain the lives of 20,000 men—and shook Britain to its depths. But out of evil came good; the bitterness of the Boer War has long since merged into blessings which will endure. For the political strife which split so many sections of the Boer communities in the years following the war, at length ended in the Union of South Africa; the soldier who defended Mafeking with such gay courage became the leader of a world-wide youth movement; and one of our former enemies grew into the great statesman who inspired the British Commonwealth of Nations.

The soldier was Baden-Powell, the leader of the Boy Scout movement; the statesman is Jan Christiaan Smuts who, as a young barrister, had joined his countrymen in the field in 1900, and commanded the Boer forces at the Cape. In the peace negotiations which followed our victory, he urged compromise, and worked unremittingly for the Union of the South African Colonies. In 1914, at the outbreak of the Great War, he fought for Britain, and led 50,000 of his countrymen in the conquest of German East Africa, while many other thousands of our former enemies came overseas to fight on our side in Europe. Smuts represented South Africa at the Imperial War Conference in

1917, took his seat in our War Cabinet, and subsequently made his historic appeal for a British Commonwealth of Nations. Temporary periods of political defeat at home had left him undaunted, his vision never lost its radiance, and his wisdom and nobility have become of incalculable benefit to the cause of the world's Peace.

Black and White was an illustrated weekly journal which challenged the supremacy of the *Graphic* and *Illustrated London News* in the days of the Boer War. Looking, recently, through a volume which covered the period from January to June, 1900, I came across two photographs. One was of G. W. Steevens, the other was of a much younger war correspondent who had been captured by the Boers, had escaped, and had lived for eight days on four slabs of chocolate.

That adventurous, cheeky-looking young man, who had already made a big reputation by his dispatches to the *Morning Post* was—Winston Churchill. He had entered the Army in 1895, had seen active service in Cuba, the Punjab, the Tirah campaign, the Battles of the Nile and Khartoum. He had then contested Oldham as a parliamentary candidate, had returned to the Army to serve in the South African Light Horse, had become a war correspondent and been in the thick of most of the battles of the Boer War.

At the time of his escape from the Boers he was twenty-five years old; and his life had already been packed with adventure. At the age of four he was flung from the back of a scared donkey, which resulted in concussion of the brain; at eighteen, in jumping from a bridge, he crashed twenty-nine feet, and was in bed for three months; two years later, during a holiday in Switzerland, he had a very narrow escape from drowning; during his first campaign in Cuba his horse was shot under him, the bullet missing the young subaltern's head by a few inches. After two more narrow escapes in Cuba he only just avoided death in India during a *mêlée* with Pathan tribesmen, and his luck saw him through many hazards in South Africa.

Destiny had obviously decided that Winston Churchill was far too important a person to die at the age of twenty-five; and Destiny, watching Winston Churchill's subsequent career, can never have regretted that decision which preserved for Humanity the greatest man of our Age.

VICTORIAN THEATRES AND MUSIC HALLS

ART, and the Stage, were the chief enthusiasms of my early days, and there was a wonderful range of attractions from which to choose. Henry Irving, the unchallenged head of his profession was at the Lyceum with Ellen Terry; Tree was at Her Majesty's; Cyril Maude and Winifred Emery at the Haymarket; George Alexander at the St. James's; Charles Wyndham and Mary Moore at the Criterion; John Hare at the Court; Gilbert and Sullivan opera at the Savoy; George Edwardes produced his enchanting musical comedies at the Gaiety and at Daly's.

The Empire and Alhambra were the recognized homes of Ballet and special variety turns; but the real Victorian music halls, where the greatest variety artists could be seen, were the Tivoli, Oxford, London Pavilion and the Royal Holborn. As many as thirty "turns," headed by such stars as Marie Lloyd and Dan Leno, could be seen in any one programme at the Tivoli or Oxford—men and women who captured an audience by sheer ability and personality—an audience who would have slain a crooner and broken up a microphone.

There were other entertainments, in those days, which attracted vast numbers of Londoners and visitors, including Earls Court Exhibitions, the Crystal Palace, and Wembley. The grounds of these pleasure-gardens were always brilliantly illuminated, pageants and firework displays, bands, circuses and fun-fairs being among their attractions. There were also many suburban theatres offering attractions, the Surrey and Elephant and Castle specializing in melodramas.

The old music halls—the Tivoli and "Pav.," the Empire and Alhambra have become cinemas; the Oxford is a Lyons' Corner House; the old boisterous nights in Town have vanished, and it is impossible to explain to the youngsters of to-day what they missed in not seeing and hearing such artists as Dan Leno, Marie Lloyd, Vesta Tilley, George Robey, Eugene Stratton, Harry Champion, Charles Coborn—and Albert Chevalier—artists who had the power to stand on a stage alone, often in front of an incongruous back-cloth, and thrill an audience.

They had been trained in a tough school—many of them had migrated “from pothouse to palace”; they had fought their way into the affections of their audiences, and reflected the character and atmosphere of their day. Every now and then a great artist such as Albert Chevalier joined their ranks, and interrupted broad comic songs and robust patriotic ballads with more delicate and subtle character studies.

At our Savage Club Saturdays we still sing the choruses of these old songs, “Daisy Bell,” “Trinity Church,” “Knocked ’em in the Old Kent Road,” “Little Dolly Daydream,” “The Man that Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo,” “Two Lovely Black Eyes,” and others—not, I am sure, because we are growing old and nostalgic, but because the tunes are so melodious and “singable.”

Those old music halls were friendly places which men used almost as their clubs. There was a warm, human atmosphere in the “Halls”—a personal contact between artist and audience which publicity and gossip-writing will never recapture. We knew little or nothing about the private lives of our favourites; but they had made themselves our friends. We had come to Town to enjoy ourselves, and the enthusiasm we brought with us added to the zest and gusto of the performers. A star of those days was expected to make an immediate impression on his audience, and dare not lose his grip for a second of the ten minutes allotted to him.

I only met one or two of these stars. Albert Chevalier was a brilliant actor who left the stage and brought realism to the Halls with character studies which he wrote. Though he began with Coster songs, such as “Knocked ’em in the Old Kent Road” and “My Old Dutch,” he also ranged among higher social circles for his types. He varied his music-hall appearances with recitals at concert halls. He was a refined, extremely intelligent artist. I had been introduced to him in the interval between one of his recitals—to which I had taken my mother. I told him how greatly he had impressed her, and he asked me to choose an item in the second part of his programme which might specially appeal to her. I chose “An Old Bachelor,” and he reduced her to tears by the pathos of his beautiful performance.

I did not meet Vesta Tilley until a year or two ago, when she had long since retired from the stage as that very charming Lady de Frece. Harry Champion was a very popular turn at our “Savage” entertainments, and, even at the age of seventy roared

out, at machine-gun speed, his fruity old ballads which he always brought to a triumphant finish with a cellar-flap dance.

Charles Coborn I met frequently, and he was still singing "The Man that Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo" at the age of ninety, and giving wonderful proof of the technique which these old "Pros." had acquired.

You will gather that these performers and the audiences of forty years ago were made for each other. They had the same tastes; they were completely untroubled by inhibitions or complexes, or introspection; they weren't in the least disposed to analyse their emotions or mental reflexes; they had robust appetites and enjoyed hearty fare; and the audiences left their immortal souls at home before spending an evening at a Victorian music-hall.

My tastes ran more definitely towards the theatre, and somehow I managed to see most of the plays presented by the actor-managers of my youth. Each theatre had a settled policy, we knew where to find our favourites and the types of play in which they would appear.

At Her Majesty's, Beerbohm Tree, who had previously established his reputation at the Haymarket in a repertoire of picturesque melodramas, had begun to climb to greater heights and to follow in the footsteps of Irving. Tree had outstanding gifts as a character actor and a master of make-up; he scored especially in flamboyant and colourful parts and in macabre rôles where his sinuous figure, undulating walk, and insinuating voice were used with great effect.

He had achieved the most spectacular of all his successes as "Svengali" in George du Maurier's "Trilby," but he had unlimited ambitions, and was to produce Shakespeare with even greater magnificence than Irving had done. His "Julius Cæsar," "Merry Wives of Windsor," "Midsummer Night's Dream," "Twelfth Night," "Richard II" and "The Tempest" were unforgettable spectacles. His "Malvolio," "Caliban," "Bottom the Weaver" and "Falstaff" were superb performances; but it is the settings of his plays which remain in my memory.

No lovelier stage picture was ever seen than Olivia's Garden in "Twelfth Night," and nothing more impressive in its classical splendour than the Forum Scene in "Julius Cæsar," which was designed by Alma-Tadema, R.A. Tree always surrounded himself courageously with first-class actors, and was apparently unconscious that some of his cast could act him off the stage. I can still

see Lewis Waller, Basil Gill, Lyn Harding and Lionel Brough "stealing the show" in Tree's productions, especially when he ventured to play heroic rôles to which he was unsuited. Among my treasured memories of nights at Her Majesty's are of Lewis Waller as "Brutus," and of Lionel Brough as "Sir Toby Belch" in the kitchen scene of "Twelfth Night," although it would be unfair to forget Tree's magnificent performance in Kipling's "The Man Who Was," or his crawling "Caliban." I recall a Tree first night which was nearly disastrous, when Oscar Asche and Lyn Harding entered on horseback, in full armour, for the tournament scene in "Richard II." The blare of trumpets frightened the horses, they reared, almost threw their heavily armoured riders into the orchestra pit, and the curtain had to be brought down in undignified haste.

Tree was a poscur who disguised his colossal energies and ambitions by an air of dreamy vagueness and inconsequent humour. His witticisms and *mots* which built up the character he presented to the world were, I believe, very carefully rehearsed impromptus, and it was widely assumed that this wit was provided by his half-brother Max Beerbohm. I can only add the trifling personal evidence derived from one meeting with him—when he was the principal guest at a dinner given to him as a tribute to his work at Her Majesty's. On this occasion he was so pitifully nervous that he could hardly reply to the toast proposed in his honour, and as he stood facing his enthusiastic audience, crumbling bread and giving every sign of abject fright, it was impossible to associate him with the extremely confident actor we had so often seen behind the footlights. While Tree's reign at Her Majesty's contributed a series of glowing panoramas to the British stage, his brother actor-managers were also controlling their theatres with individuality, and providing dramatic fare which proved greatly to the taste of their audiences.

George Alexander, at the St. James's, ranged from his enchanting productions of "The Prisoner of Zenda" and "Old Heidelberg" to his equally memorable "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray," "His House in Order," and other plays by the leading dramatists of his day. Alexander was at his very best in the rôle of the perfectly groomed grey-haired man of the world. He moved through his drawing-rooms of the St. James's as if he had been "born in the purple"; always perfectly dressed, always able to control the situations in which Pinero or his other authors placed



THE VICTORIAN STAGE.

Sir Henry Irving.
Sir George Alexander.

Dame Ellen Terry.
Sir Herbert Tree.

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him, he gave no hint that he had won his spurs under Irving's resplendent banner at the Lyceum. I saw him in all his leading rôles, and he was always a delight to me.

Charles Wyndham and Mary Moore, who were partners at the Criterion, appealed to a somewhat older type of playgoer. Wyndham, with his rather sing-song rugged voice and his suggestion of infinite experience, was ideally cast as the "raisonneur" of such drawing-room dramas as "The Liars" and "The Squire of Dames," in which he gave such sage advice to erring ladies and their lovers, alternating this rôle by playing the lover to perfection as "David Garrick," in which, even when he was an old man, he could make feminine hearts flutter.

At the Comedy Theatre, Charles Hawtrey was seen in one of his most successful plays, H. V. Esmond's "One Summer's Day." Hawtrey with the sleek hair and moustache, the silky voice, and the superb sense of comedy, had appeared in innumerable farces and light comedies, lying and deceiving more charmingly than any other man on the stage. He was always himself—always irresistible—and in "One Summer's Day" proved himself a very fine actor, who could be deeply sincere and pathetic as well as airily amusing.

Cyril Maude and Winifred Emery were firmly established at the Haymarket, Maude either playing helpless charming ninnies whom every woman in the audience wanted to mother, or quietly sincere rôles such as Barrie provided for him later in "The Little Minister." Charles Frohman, the American actor-manager had not yet established the Duke of York's as the spiritual home of Barrie, but at that theatre I was to revel later in the first production of "Peter Pan," "The Admirable Crichton," and other plays so perfectly produced by Dion Boucicault.

John Hare, a character actor of the older school—crisp, incisive, with the technique of an old master—whose character studies were built up with infinite care, was at the Court Theatre. The Adelphi, the home of Melodrama, was occupied for a season by the greatest living actress, Sarah Bernhardt. I saw "La Divine Sarah" as Hamlet (yes: Hamlet), and she gave the best performance of the young distraught Prince that I have ever seen. Her voice was sheer music, and within her fragile body were powers which became terrifying in the big emotional scenes of "La Dame aux Camélias," "La Tosca," "Fedora," and other plays in which it was my fortune to see her.

I also had the opportunity of watching her from the back of the

Adelphi stage during her season. A friend had smuggled me into the "Flies"—that gallery far above the stage from which the curtain and scenery were controlled by a bewildering array of ropes, wheels and pulleys. Leaning over the narrow wooden gallery, which was like the bridge of an old ship, I saw Sarah Bernhardt walk on to the stage from her dressing-room, accompanied by a retinue of assistants. I was intrigued to watch her maid place a tray of sand (or resin) on the stage, in which Sarah rubbed the soles of her shoes, obviously to prevent her slipping. Within the next few seconds she had thrown off a cloak, and rushed screaming on to the scene. She continued to act, even after she had lost a leg in an accident.

The Savoy, the home of Gilbert and Sullivan opera, and the Lyceum were my most irresistible magnets, and I can see now that quilted satin curtain at the Savoy converted into a blaze of gold as the "limes" and footlights were switched on; I see Francois Cellier raising his baton to conduct the orchestra through the overture, and the curtain rise on an evening of sheer delight. I was present at many Savoy First Nights when Sir Arthur Sullivan conducted his own lovely scores, and when Gilbert sat watching the show critically from a box. And I recall a pathetic First Night when D'Oyly Carte, the manager of the Savoy, was nearing the end of his career. He was a very sick man, and he was propped on pillows in the stage-box, watched over by his devoted wife, who was so soon to carry on the responsibility of management.

The Savoy is full of memories for me—of nights when such stars as Rutland Barrington, Scott Fishe, and Henry Lytton gave perfect interpretations of Gilbert and Sullivan's characters, interspersed with at least one other moving incident—Isobel Jay's last night on the stage, before her marriage. She was playing Phyllis to the best Strephon I have ever seen—Henry Lytton. They were singing that haunting "Iolanthe" duet. "None shall part us from each other," when Isobel Jay broke down and sobbed so inconso-
lably that she had to be led from the stage.

I also remember the period when Henry Irving was on tour and the Lyceum was under the management of Forbes-Robertson, that most distinguished actor whom all serious theatre-goers regarded as Irving's inevitable successor. Forbes-Robertson had a lot of Irving's classic distinction of appearance, a remoteness which brought dignity to every part he played. He had a glorious voice, and his "Hamlet" fulfilled all the expectations of his

admirers. His "Romeo," to the "Juliet" of Mrs. Patrick Campbell, provided me with one of my most exquisite memories of the theatre; but Forbes-Robertson could not give an undistinguished performance. He was an artist who had been attracted to the stage, and he brought to his acting all the feeling for beauty which his training as an artist had provided.

The theatres devoted to light musical entertainments, were the Prince of Wales's, Terry's, Shaftesbury, Daly's and the Gaiety. The Gaiety was one of the first theatres I ever visited; and I was fortunate to see Ellaline Terriss and Seymour Hicks when they played the young lovers in "The Shop Girl." They had recently been the hero and heroine of a runaway marriage—having braved the anger of Ellaline's father, the dashing William Terriss, who was Henry Irving's leading man. They obviously adored each other, and their audiences were thrilled to see these happy young people in love. They were both enchanting performers—Ellaline being unbelievably pretty and Seymour the dashing high-spirited young hero of everybody's dreams. They played together in a succession of George Edwardes musical comedies. Hicks then wrote many plays of his own, built and managed two theatres, and raced through life with breathless energy and success. While at the Gaiety, George Edwardes produced a series of consistently successful musical comedies, he concentrated on light opera at Dalys. Here one could see Hayden Coffin and Marie Tempest at the height of their careers, until Marie left the musical stage to become a brilliant comedienne in non-musical plays.

J. M. Barrie had begun to attract attention as a dramatist, with his "Professor's Love Story," in 1896. "The Little Minister" followed in 1897, "Quality Street," "The Admirable Crichton" and "Little Mary" were the great theatrical successes of 1903, and "Peter Pan" (which Tree had refused) started its forty years of triumph in 1904. For the next twelve years he added to his reputation, providing memorable parts for Gerald du Maurier, Fay Compton and other stars.

I met Barrie on two occasions, both at the "Savage," when he was lured from the seclusion of his neighbouring flat, to dine with us. At one of these dinners, I made a sketch of him, and asked him to sign it. He inferred that I was presenting it to him, and I had, of course, no alternative but to ask him to accept it. I happened to be teaching drawing to Michael Llewellyn Davies, one of his wards for whom he wrote "Peter Pan."

Among the other successful dramatists at the beginning of the century were Pinero, Henry Arthur Jones, R. C. Carton, Haddon Chambers, Oscar Wilde, Robert Marshall, Hubert Henry Davies, Bernard Shaw, and Captain Basil Hood, who was W. S. Gilbert's successor as the librettist of several charming Savoy operas.

George Bernard Shaw obviously deserves a special paragraph to himself, for in 1898 he crashed into the world of "drawing-room drama" with his "Plays, Pleasant and Unpleasant," followed sardonically with "Plays for Puritans" in 1900, and in 1903 got into his stride with the production of "Man and Superman." He followed with a play every succeeding year, and has long since made theatrical history with "John Bull's Other Island," "Major Barbara," "The Doctor's Dilemma," and other Shavian masterpieces, which will continue to be performed long after his dramatic contemporaries have been forgotten.

But, dominating the entire world of the theatre of my youth was the great man who had been its acknowledged king for twenty years. I consider myself a very fortunate person in having seen Henry Irving in revivals of "The Bells," "Charles I," "Richard III," "The Lyons Mail," "Louis XI," "The Merchant of Venice," "The Corsican Brothers," "Olivia," "Faust," and in his first productions of "Henry VIII," "Don Quixote," "A Story of Waterloo," and "Becket."

He played most of these parts superbly, but to me, he was something infinitely greater than an actor. When he stepped on to the stage he seemed a being from another world; he had a spirituality which ennobled every part he played; he suggested the ascetic, unworldly distinction of a prelate, a remoteness which it was impossible to associate with theatricality. He brought to the theatre the atmosphere of a cathedral. He had the face of a saint—of a scholar pale and drawn by incessant study. But the theatre was his vocation, and he gave to it the intensity of devotion which the most ardent acolyte ever gave to religion. Artists were among Irving's greatest admirers.

"Becket" was the first part in which I saw him; it was destined to be the last in which he ever appeared, for he died in 1905, at Bradford, during a tour in which he had struggled heroically against increasing ill-health. He was the first British actor to be knighted; he was buried at Westminster Abbey; and his fame will surely endure.

The best study of Irving that I have ever read was from the

pen of Ellen Terry. Discussing her first meeting with him she wrote: "His soul was not more surely in his body than in the theatre. He thought of nothing else, cared for nothing else, went without his dinner to buy a book that might be helpful in studying, or a stage jewel that might be helpful to wear. He spent his life in incessant labour, denied himself everything for that purpose . . . I think this was the peculiar quality in his acting afterwards—a kind of fine temper, like the purest steel, produced by the perpetual fight against difficulties."

Ellen Terry, who shared his triumphs as leading lady at the Lyceum for many years, gave many graphic word-pictures of Irving, in her autobiography. Although she was so closely associated with him she continually refers to his spirituality, his remoteness, and the other qualities which impressed me so greatly from the first moment when I saw him.

About his "Hamlet," she wrote, "The cardinal qualities of his Prince of Denmark were strength, delicacy, distinction. There was never a touch of commonness. Whatever he said or did, blood and breeding pervaded him. 'We must start this play a living thing,' he used to say at rehearsals, and he worked until the skin grew tight over his face, until he grew livid with fatigue, yet still beautiful."

I was at the first night of the "Richard III" revival, in which he was superb. After that triumphant production he slipped on the stairs at his home, broke a bone in his knee, and had to close the theatre. It was the turn of the tide. His health began to fail—he had carried on an indomitable struggle against ill-health. As Ellen Terry said, "Only the spirit in that frail body remained as strong as ever. Nothing could bend it, much less break it, I think of him as 'Macbeth' when, in the last act, he looked like a great famished wolf, weak with the weakness of a giant exhausted. Destiny seemed to hang over him, and he knew that there was no hope, no mercy."

Henley's stoical lines might have been written of him as he was in his last days:

"Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit, from pole to pole
I thank whatever gods there be
For my unconquerable soul."

VI

THE EDWARDIAN ERA

BRITAIN had emerged from the Boer War in a chastened mood; the long campaign had done more than administer a severe shock to our national pride; we found ourselves facing a new world. "Cook's son, Duke's son," had fought side by side in South Africa, and a wider consciousness of human relationships had grown; they had returned to a world of social and political upheaval. The mixing for the first time of our citizen soldiers—men from every section of the community—had already broken down many of the former class distinctions. Ardent reformers were on the warpath. They disclosed vast stratas of poverty beneath those Victorian façades of security and opulence. Charity was obviously no panacea for chronic poverty; the whole social structure needed rebuilding; the time for makeshift patching and intermittent outbursts of benevolence was past. There was rebellion against the self-satisfied minds which turned blind eyes to poverty and to scandalously low wages.

The new journalism, represented by the *Daily Mail* and *Daily Express*, led new social crusades, the younger people followed the reformers, but welcomed even more ardently the new opportunities which inventors and scientists were providing. The development of the Motor Car was in itself evidence that the old slow-moving world was being left behind; the Aeroplane was soon to open more thrilling possibilities.

The popular Press had made its readers increasingly aware of every aspect of the world in which they lived in the early days of the century. The older Victorian newspapers had mainly been read by the middle and upper classes, and unless strikes or other serious manifestations of unrest occurred, these weightier journals did not stress the fact that a considerable section of the community lived in a state of almost chronic poverty. If a period of exceptional hardship occurred, such as in a severe winter, charity organizations sprang into action, and the newspapers themselves opened Funds to collect money for soup-kitchens and relief generally.

The comfortable classes had regarded poverty as the result of laziness, lack of ambition, thriftlessness—and drink. They were confirmed in the latter opinion, for drink was one of the country's worst evils in those days when beer and spirits were very cheap, the "pubs" were open all day, and drunken men and women were familiar sights in the streets, especially on Saturday when the week's work was ended. Mr. Harold Herd, in his "Panorama 1900-1942," reminds us that the convictions for drunkenness in 1905 were over 207,000, whereas by 1938 the stiffening of the licensing laws, the increasing price of liquor, and the increasing sobriety of the nation, reduced this yearly total to 46,000.

But, at the beginning of the century, the consciousness of wider aspects of the evils of poverty was emphasized with ever-growing force by social reformers and by Labour champions in the Government. The reformers were constantly at work, and many rich men and women were devoting their whole lives to the betterment of the less fortunate sections of the community. The most practical and far-reaching reforms were achieved by legislation, Lloyd George's taxation of Land Values being the forerunner of many Acts of Parliament which gradually reduced the barriers between poverty and affluence.

The comfortable middle-classes, reading their newspapers, were filled with forebodings. They saw ever-lengthening inroads on their hard-earned security; it was obvious to them that such vast social reforms as those under discussion meant—at least—increased taxation. Merely by looking out of their curtained windows they could see signs of a rapidly changing world. If they had been able to look a few years ahead, they would have seen their worst fears realized; not only was life going to be much more expensive, but many of those strictly segregated homes were again to know the tragedy of War.

While Britain was finding quite sufficient preoccupation in its own domestic upheavals—and being disturbed by almost perpetual growing pains—Germany was engaged in a much more ominous programme. The Kaiser had continually been in the news, his boasting and strutting, his threats and his antics, had become tiresomely familiar. Occasionally when his behaviour had been unduly preposterous, Britain would growl, but we refused to be seriously alarmed by this mountebank with the fierce moustaches until—it was too late.

The Victorian Era had closed, for the great Queen had died

in 1901—a year before the Boer War ended. She had reigned for sixty-three years. She was succeeded by her son, the Prince of Wales, who became Edward VII. Ascending the Throne at the age of sixty-one, he had, as the Prince of Wales, been a highly popular figure ever since his marriage nearly forty years previously to the “sea king’s daughter,” Princess Alexandra. The Prince, in addition to undertaking his many official duties as representative of the Crown, had also endeared himself to the public as a sportsman and man-about-town. They loved his geniality, and his democratic, unconventional friendships. They revelled in the stories of his card-parties and race-meetings, his holidays abroad, his association with the lovely ladies of his day, his successes on the Turf as owner of Derby winners, the victories of his yacht, the *Britannia*, and his patronage of the theatre.

They even relished the scandals with which his name was occasionally associated; for he was a very human soul, and even a Prince must “have his fun.” But that fun was seldom allowed to interfere with his public duties, those official tours which took him to India and to many European countries. He had, during his mother’s seclusion, had a very complete acquaintance with the duties of Royalty and the responsibilities of the Crown; but his reign started with the dramatic postponement of his coronation, owing to a sudden illness which deferred the long-anticipated ceremonies for two months.

His reign as “Edward the Peacemaker” proved to be a notable one; he established Britain’s firm friendship with France, handled his relationships with the German Emperor with all possible tact, and, in general, proved that the genial *bon viveur* had become an outstanding statesman.

His short reign of nine years was full of political upheavals, and three Prime Ministers were destined to serve under him—Balfour, Campbell Bannerman, and Asquith. He was to see the battles of Free Trade *versus* Tariff Reform, and the subsequent introduction of Lloyd George’s Insurance Schemes, which were followed by an epidemic of strikes.

King Edward died soon after the introduction of Lloyd George’s Budget and the quarrel between the Lords and Commons—“Peers *versus* People.” The King had known each of the political rivals, had studied their impassioned speeches, and realized that Democracy was the goal at which reformers aimed. Better housing, better education, better rewards for labour were the



FOUR GENERATIONS.

H.R.H. The Prince of Wales
(King Edward VII.).

H.R.H. The Duke of York
(King George V.).

H.M. Queen Victoria holding the present Duke of Windsor.

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projects which occupied the country during his closing years; and he had personal acquaintance with many other social changes. During his reign the motor car had arrived, and was already becoming a recognized means of transport. He had already seen the birth of the aeroplane. In 1906, Santos Dumont had made his first flight—of 250 yards; in 1908, Orville Wright and his brother Wilbur had flown 45 and 56 miles respectively; and in 1909, a year before the King's death, the aeroplane had come to Britain, Bleriot having crossed the Channel from Calais to Dover.

The Edwardian Era introduced many other inventions. Telephones, typewriters, passenger lifts, vacuum cleaners, cinemas, improvements in lighting, labour-saving appliances, all destined to change the character and tempo of our lives. The telephone, invented by Graham Bell twenty-five years earlier, had first been operated in Britain by the National Telephone Company, and it was not until 1911 that the services were taken over officially by the Postmaster-General.

Typewriters, which first appeared in 1874, took a considerable time to develop into the machines which we know to-day. The first "visible writing" machine was not produced until 1897, and we had to wait another fifteen years for the introduction of the portable typewriter. Passenger lifts also developed slowly. Electric elevators were unknown until 1889, and gearless traction lifts were operated for the first time in 1904. Another twenty years were to elapse before a passenger could control a lift by pressing a button.

Vacuum cleaners began to banish the brush-and-dustpan in 1901, while gas-lit homes were made infinitely brighter by the introduction of the incandescent light and the gas mantle. Incandescent lighting had been invented some years before, when it had been boldly claimed that by the Welsbach system, with the use of less fragile mantles, electric light had been superseded. That claim, as we know, was a slight exaggeration, but gas continued to fight electricity, introducing a greatly-improved, inverted gas mantle in 1903, although it did not come into wide domestic use until six years afterwards.

Another feature of modern life, the Cinema, to the birth of which we have already referred, established itself very firmly in 1907, when an American producer, D. W. Griffith, presented the first big screen picture, "Ben Hur"; but it was not

until twenty-one years later that we were to hear our first sound-picture. The Gramophone was, at the beginning of the century, a "Talking Machine," either of the cylinder or disc type, but in either case it was a clumsy box from which a horn protruded and focussed the sound.

The introduction of these many inventions in the Edwardian era underlined the fact that the world had very definitely awakened from its Victorian repose, and that the activities of its scientists, inventors and reformers, were to exercise a lasting influence on the future of Britain. It was fortunate for our peace of mind that we could not visualize the potentialities of Bleriot's first flight across the Channel.

The rebuilding of London commenced at the beginning of the new century, and I am reminded, by that admirable work, "The Face of London," by Harold P. Clunn, how greatly my hunting grounds—Fleet Street and the Strand—have been altered during the last fifty years. The most striking change I remember was the sweeping away of the sordid warren of streets which made possible the building of Aldwych and Kingsway, and the demolition of Clare Market with the slums around Drury Lane, which began in 1900. Bush House has been built on the site once occupied by Holywell Street and Wych Street. Holywell Street, better known as Bookseller's Row, a dark alley of unsavoury shops, ran parallel to the Strand—between the Churches of St. Clement's and St. Mary le Strand; Wych Street was a continuation of Drury Lane.

Wych Street contained two theatres, the Globe and the Olympic, which were swept away in the reconstruction plans. These also involved the former Gaiety Theatre and Restaurant, the last performance in the old Gaiety taking place in 1903. Mr. Clunn tells us that when the old theatre was demolished, swarms of rats, which were disturbed, invaded the restaurant next door and caused much destruction before they were driven back into the sewers.

The erection of Australia House at the corner of Aldwych, of Bush House, the Aldwych and Strand Theatres, the Waldorf Hotel, and many other fine buildings in Kingsway beautified the face of London, and demonstrated the spirit of enterprise which was everywhere apparent in the early years of the twentieth century. Kingsway, named in honour of King Edward VII, who opened it in 1905, joined the Strand to Holborn, and substituted dignity for what was formerly decay and squalor.

The widening of Fleet Street and the Strand (which, commencing in 1899, has still not been completed on the south side near Charing Cross Station) also provided the opportunity for the erection of many fine buildings; and elsewhere in London, architects were very active. Victoria Station was rebuilt between 1902 and 1908, Waterloo's reconstruction commenced in 1900 and lasted for twenty-one years, the Royal Automobile Club in Pall Mall dates from 1908. Many of our present theatres and other well-known resorts were built at the end of the Victorian era. The Trocadero and the Carlton Hotel were opened in 1897, Wyndham's Theatre and the London Hippodrome in 1900, the new Mall in 1903 and 1904, the Lyons' Popular Café in Piccadilly in 1904, the Coliseum in 1905, the Ritz Hotel in 1906, the London Opera House, the Winter Garden, the Palladium and the new Adelphi in 1910.

Beneath the streets of London, architects and engineers were also active, for the Underground railways were being electrified and extended. The Bakerloo Tube railway was completed in 1905, and the Hammersmith and Finsbury Park extension a year later. Only those of my contemporaries who recall the horrors of the days when our underground trains were run by steam and we travelled through dark grimy tunnels, choked with sulphurous smoke, and emerged sprinkled with soot, can realize what blessings the electrification of the Tubes have brought to London travellers.

Among other buildings which were erected early in the century, and which have long since become prominent features of London life, are Lyons' Coventry Street Corner House, in 1908, and Selfridges, which was opened with a most distinguished publicity campaign in 1910. The construction of the great London County Hall was begun in 1912.

It is only fair to remember these achievements when thinking of that far-off era of hansom cabs and horse-buses, "boaters," and top-hats, hustles and picture-hats—that amusing age when motor cars and aeroplanes, wireless and the cinema were emerging from their cradles.

I was a hudding illustrator in those days which began such a revolutionary chapter in Britain's history. I had to find work among the newer magazines which were springing up in such profusion—and which provided a reasonable reward if you studied their requirements carefully. In spite of the fact that I had my full share of black days when I was hawking my drawings

around Fleet Street, I was never tempted to give up the exciting struggle. I concentrated mostly on humorous drawing, and the *Boy's Own Paper*, which had bought my first sketch, began to provide regular openings for my drawings, which dealt with every aspect of life in and out of school.

My scrap books, containing most of the drawings I ever made for the Press, remind me that I was very busy between the years 1901-1907. My sketches seemed to pour all over the pages, until I decided to vary my attack by writing and illustrating frivolous serials. While the *B.O.P.* was trying to find room for my spate of work, I attacked the women's papers—designing headings for their feature pages—and the "Boys' Comics." Meanwhile the picture-postcard craze began to assume huge proportions. I did hundreds of picture postcards in colour, and managed also to find openings in the *Tatler*, *Sketch* and *Bystander* and other papers, with humorous pages.

I also plunged into advertisement illustration. I was getting such a considerable fan mail from *B.O.P.* readers during 1902, that it was decided to answer their questions in three articles on Black-and-White Drawing. These merely whetted their appetites, and the subsequent correspondence led to the writing of much more detailed and elaborate lessons which formed the basis of the course of postal instruction which was launched by "The Press Art School."

Having written a dozen lessons which embodied my experiences, I persuaded a group of Art Editors of the leading journals to write supplements to my instruction; finally I was able to offer a series of lessons, to establish "The Press Art School," and to begin to lead a double life. My days were occupied in drawing and writing, my evenings in criticizing the work of my pupils.

As my work developed, I established my school at Tudor Hall. I treasure a photograph of the Hall, with a group of its pupils as they appeared early in the reign of Queen Victoria. It was a school in those days, and some of its pupils are caught in the act of playing croquet on the lawn. The Principal at that time was the Reverend Doctor Todd, and he is seen among the young ladies of his select "Academy for the Daughters of Gentlewomen." He is holding the hand of his youngest pupil. No doubt *they* studied Drawing and Water Colour Painting, which in those days was selected as one of the elegant accomplishments suitable for gentlefolk.

I often wonder what these prim Victorians would say if they were able to revisit their old school now. The building itself has hardly altered in general character with the years, although it received considerable damage during the War's worst air-raids. The slender columns that support the garden entrance from the first floor are still there, and as I look through my studio window behind them, I see the lawns on which these ladies played their leisurely games after lessons.

Tudor Hall was built over eighty years ago, soon after the Crystal Palace—the ruins of which we can see from our upper windows. Queen Victoria intended the building for the use of her Royal children when visiting the Crystal Palace, which was their father's—the Prince Consort's—inspiration. Later, Tudor Hall became the home of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, one of the Queen's Ladies-in-Waiting. It passed, by stages, into the possession of a famous Judge, and was subsequently taken over, very successfully, by Dr. Todd. If Dr. Todd had been told that one day his Academy would be devoted to teaching Art by Correspondence, and that pupils living in all parts of the world would study lessons conducted from the rooms in which he taught, he would certainly not have believed it.

Tudor Hall has been the home of the Press Art School for over twenty-nine years, though the School itself was founded nearly forty years ago. Instruction which at one time was given verbally to rows of demure young ladies, is now carried to pupils of all ages in all parts of the world.

Memories of my personal adventures in Fleet Street should, I am aware, be banished while I am trying to concentrate on such a subject as the Edwardian Era; but perhaps I may be forgiven if I interrupt my larger task for a moment to confess to a fraud into which I was lured by my adventurous brother, Bart, nearly forty years ago. We had decided to take a trip to Boulogne by the steamship which left the Old Swan Pier at London Bridge almost every morning. We chose a Saturday, I took my sketchbook and several pencils, as I was certain there would be wonderful material for me. When we arrived, the ship was packed from stern to stern, and one could hardly move on the decks.

This was not nearly good enough for Bart; and, about ten minutes after the voyage began, he disappeared. In about a quarter of an hour he came back with the message, "You're an artist on the *Daily Graphic*. I've told the Purser that you're going

to illustrate the trip for the paper. The Captain will see us on the bridge when we are a bit further down the river." It was no good protesting; in a little while, the Purser pushed his way through the crowd (fortunately, I was already busy with my sketchbook) and escorted us to the bridge, where the charming Captain Owen received us most cordially. I made one or two passable sketches of him, and notes of everything else which would keep me occupied while Bart lauded me and my work to the skies, and I prayed that, when we reached the open sea I should not be violently sick.

Nothing untoward happened; on the contrary, we were entertained to a most lavish lunch, taken ashore at Boulogne by the Captain, and introduced to his many friends, and further entertained on the homeward journey. I could only ease my conscience by completing a batch of the sketches and sending them to the Captain as an acknowledgment of his delightful hospitality, apologizing, at the same time, that the *Daily Graphic* had regretfully been compelled to omit the work owing to shortage of space.

One of the great attractions to the young bachelor of those days was the Covent Garden Fancy Dress Balls. Fancy dress was optional, but many misguided habitués made themselves uncomfortable in the hope of winning one of the many prizes. The more heroic of the competitors would stagger round the floor with washing machines, kitchen stoves, or other assorted merchandize draped round them; there were the usual knights-in-armor, knights of the bath and cavaliers; but the majority of the visitors went to dance and enjoy themselves.

I was introduced, at one of the Balls, to an Indian Prince who wore his own magnificent native costume, studded with jewels, but the most surprising feature of his barbaric make-up was his flashing smile. He had a diamond set in every one of his teeth.

The "ladies of the Town" usually wore evening gowns with very low *décolletagé*, and, during a vigorous barn dance, their ample bosoms were apt to escape suddenly from their corsets. The "M.C.'s" who patrolled the dancing floor were in no way disturbed or shocked by these embarrassing episodes. They would merely glance over their shoulders at the careless lady, order her to "put 'em back," and then turn their attention to other duties.

But in case such episodes suggest that frivolity occupied a great deal of our lives in those days—or nights—let me hasten to arrest that impression.

No period in our history witnessed such startling developments as the Edwardian era. We saw the birth of a new world—the conquest of the air, the development of the motor car, of wireless and the “Pictures,” the emancipation of women, the struggles, sacrifices and futilities which proved to be mere preludes to another and greater War. Repose and security were banished by Speed; it was a period of frustration and experiment, discovery and disillusion, triumph and tragedy. And as I think of that period and the years which followed, incidents which had faded into the background of my memory, become as vivid as yesterday.

I am standing in the Mall watching the funeral procession of King Edward VII, my eyes held by two details—the Kaiser dressed in the uniform of a British Field-Marshal, his moustache looking even more theatrically truculent than one had expected; and King Edward’s favourite dog, “Cæsar,” padding along behind the late King’s favourite charger. I see Joseph Chamberlain haranguing a crowd in the Guildhall yard advocating Tariff Reform. I remember our fury at the outrages of the Suffragettes. My thoughts look ahead. The British Empire Exhibition brings many personal memories, for I was on two of the many Committees and helped to hang one of the picture exhibitions. Later there were other events in which I had a personal association, and I feel that I can only see these years in proper perspective by retracing my steps and discussing them in their right order and sequence.

During 1910, the year in which “Edward the Peacemaker” died, progress was beginning to be very active in Great Britain. The Marconi Transatlantic Wireless Service was inaugurated; and Paulhan, the French aviator, won the *Daily Mail’s* £10,000 prize for the first flight from London to Manchester. But England was even more stirred by the fact that a certain Dr. Crippen—who had murdered his wife and who had escaped with his accomplice, Ethel Le Neve—had been discovered on a liner bound for America and arrested.

Nothing excited the British public or occupied more space in the British Press than a murder mystery, and I shall not forget a holiday in Switzerland that year when, during a trip by funicular to the summit of Pilatus, while my wife and I were entranced by the scenery, a fellow-passenger interrupted us with the thrilling news, “*They’ve got Crippen!*”

The following year saw the Coronation of King George and

Queen Mary, a demonstration by 40,000 women demanding women's suffrage, and a speech by the German Emperor foreshadowing vast increases in his Navy. In 1912, Britain was shocked by the loss of Captain Scott and most of his companions of the Antarctic Expedition, and still more horrified a month later with the news of the *Titanic* disaster. The great White Star liner had struck an iceberg in a fog and had sunk with the loss of over 1,500 out of a total of 2,200 lives. The Suffragettes were very active throughout the year, several of their leaders going on hunger-strike after being sentenced to terms of imprisonment. Suffragist outrages continued during the following months—a bomb was placed in Westminster Abbey, the women rioted outside Buckingham Palace and elsewhere, but their activities were soon to be forgotten in the face of far graver happenings. An Archduke and his wife were assassinated in Sarajevo, Serbia; and we were suddenly plunged into the Great War.

Women forgot their preoccupation with the Vote, and, as they have since done in a far greater war, gave every atom of their strength and courage to the service of their country.

Before attempting to summarize the events of the Great War, I must not disregard a very important feature of my panorama, to which I have so far given little attention. We have studied the Victorian stage, and I now ask you to consider the contribution which artists and authors made to Victorian and Edwardian history.

For statesmen and scientists, inventors and social reformers, were not the only builders of a new world. Every aspect of Victorian life was being challenged; its art and literature were being attacked, much of its architecture was being swept away, its homes refurnished, the entire conceptions of its life deranged. The foundations of Academic art were being undermined, literature was invaded by writers with a mission—provocative young men whose pens were weapons and who became propagandists and sociologists.

Let us then, before considering the war which was fought with far deadlier weapons, deal with the battles which had so long been waged with brush and pen.

VICTORIAN AND EDWARDIAN ART AND LITERATURE

IT has often been asserted that, throughout the Victorian era, æsthetic taste hardly existed, and that the arts of painting, design, architecture, illustration, and furnishing reached their lowest level. The Victorian home, cluttered up with its assortment of meaningless detail, certainly cried aloud for artistic spring-cleaning, but it is often forgotten that, while "domestic design" continued to express the taste of the Philistine, there were many periods of the Victorian era in which distinguished art was being produced.

It was in the 'Fifties that the first of a series of artistic reforms was sponsored by the pre-Raphaelites, who included Millais, Holman Hunt and Dante Gabriel Rossetti; their influence was later to be developed by a younger group of artists and writers, including Swinburne, Burne-Jones, and William Morris, whose aim was not merely to influence painting, but to reform and remodel taste in general. While the pre-Raphaelite movement was chiefly concerned with painting and pictorial art, the æsthetic movement which followed, aimed to cover everyday domestic fields, as well as studio life. William Morris was the leader of the "household" reformation, and the products of his workshop—his wall-papers, tiles, glass, and fabrics had a wide appeal.

The Æsthetes reached the peak of their successes in the 'Seventies, but the movement was brought to ridicule by some of its leaders, and by the affectations of their disciples. The whole Æsthetic cult was brilliantly satirized by W. S. Gilbert, in *Patience*, which, produced in 1881, showed Reginald Bunthorne, a "fleshy" poet, and Archibald Grosvenor, an "idyllic" poet, attended by a group of rapturous, lovesick maidens—and contrasted by a chorus of Heavy Dragoons. *Patience* underlined the fact that the Æsthetic movement expressed disillusion instead of vigour; its pictures were charged with melancholy and lovelorn weariness; frail consumptive-looking maidens and distraught males covered the walls of the Grosvenor Gallery where the first of its exhibitions was held. At this exhibition, the etchings and paintings of Whistler were the

chief attraction, his work being so severely attacked by Ruskin that he was sued for libel by Whistler. But Whistler's influence on Art, and William Morris's on design, decoration and typography were permanent.

Oscar Wilde joined the movement during its final stages and gave it a further lease of life, becoming, to the public, the prince of all the æsthetic poseurs. He was a wit who took the centre of the stage with the greatest assurance; he combined a genius for poetry and comedy with exhibitionism which was impervious to public ridicule, and although his career ended in disgrace, his comedies have become classics.

The Æsthetes had, however, enlarged the public's interest in art, convincing many of the visitors to the Royal Academy that patient imitations of nature and sentimental illustrations could be very dull compared to works of genuine imagination. They saw, in the paintings of Dante Gabriel Rossetti that poetry, mysticism and imagery could be transferred to canvas; they saw that Burne-Jones could invest, with spiritual imagination, romantic, classical and allegorical themes which had formerly been treated as "costume illustrations."

His "Golden Stairs" was destined to decorate the walls of thousands of British homes. The leaders of the pre-Raphaelite and Æsthetic movements were not only attacking the Philistines with paint, but with the pen; for the poems of Tennyson, published in 1857, contained some superb illustrations in line by D. G. Rossetti and Holman Hunt. These admirable drawings, engraved on wood, ushered in a brilliant period of illustration in "the 'Sixties" when a group of artists—notably Fred Walker, Boyd Houghton, Pinwell, Frederick Sandys and Charles Keene—produced work for *Good Words*, *Once a Week*, the *Cornhill*, and other magazines, which has never been surpassed. The standard they raised was carried on by a succession of fine illustrators who worked for *The Graphic*, *Illustrated London News*, and for book publishers.

A further notable period in Art history began when Claude Manet, a notable French painter, exhibited a picture entitled "The Impressionist." The name became associated with a group of French artists, including Courbet and Monet. Impressionism developed into a new art movement when a memorial exhibition of Manet's pictures was held in Paris, in 1884. Here work was exhibited which was in direct contrast to the conventional

"finished" treatment and subject of academical paintings. Much of the work consisted of spontaneous impressions, experiments to represent the beauty of light, efforts to record instantaneous effects or vivid impressions without laborious building-up of detail. There was, in a broad sense, nothing startlingly new or revolutionary in the idea at the basis of Impressionism. Turner had obviously influenced it, and the term has since been applied to artists whose work is far removed from that of the first Impressionists and their disciples.

All these movements proved that the traditional academical work which the Victorian public regarded as High Art represented only one branch of pictorial expression. Yet, notwithstanding the efforts of the artistic "revolutionaries," Art, in the Victorian and Edwardian eras was dominated by the giants of the Royal Academy. The pictures on the walls of the average "substantial" home were mainly reproductions of the works of Leighton, Millais, Alma-Tadema, Burne-Jones and their contemporaries, though the older homes were still loyal to Frith's "Derby Day," Landseer's "Stag at Bay," and "The Meeting of Wellington and Blucher at Waterloo," by Maclise. At the opening of the Royal Academy each year, Art became front-page news.

Realism and representation were regarded by the vast majority of the public as essential characteristics of High Art. They had loved to puzzle over the "picture of the year"—which was usually an enlarged story-illustration. Luke Fildes' "The Doctor" was immensely popular; any simple domestic subject painted with infinite accuracy of detail was certain to have a wide appeal; highly-finished portraits of celebrities also attracted admiring crowds; pictures of children and animals, of romantic lovers in picturesque costumes were assured of success, especially if they were "pretty" and life-like.

Into this world of meticulously accurate representation, many rebels, as we have seen, had forced their way. Whistler, an American artist who had studied in Paris became the most notable of these revolutionaries. Scorning the academic and traditional, he had derived inspiration from the Japanese decorative artists. Starting his career as an etcher he developed into a painter. He produced a most distinguished portrait of his mother—which was rejected by the Academy and only hung subsequently by the insistence of a member of the R.A. Council. His portrait of Carlyle was also a masterpiece; but the subjects with which his

name was connected were delicate studies of atmosphere—his Nocturnes, Harmonies and Symphonies—one of which so infuriated Ruskin that he accused the artist of “flinging a pot of paint in the face of the public.” It was for this accusation that Ruskin was sued for libel, and had to pay a farthing damages. John S. Sargent, another American who had studied in Paris, was destined to become one of our most challenging and famous portrait painters. His verve was triumphant, he used his brush with the greatest freedom, and his work was a striking contrast, in its vigour and character, to the unemotional stolidity of other portrait painters.

But the Academicians whose names stood for Art in those days were too firmly established to be disturbed by isolated champions of a new technique and outlook. Every year the public had flocked to welcome the familiar achievements of their favourites. They never tired of Leighton’s beautifully-painted reconstructions of classical themes, of Alma-Tadema’s Roman and Grecian groups reclining in miraculously realistic marble palaces, the bird subjects served up with a dash of mild humour by Stacey Marks, Stanhope Forbes’s pictures of Newlyn fisher-folk, the allegories of G. F. Watts, the classical Egyptian and Roman themes of Sir Edward Poynter, Herkomer’s variations on “The Last Muster,” Wyllie’s seascapes, Leader’s highly-stippled landscapes, or Frank Dicksee’s problem pictures.

It has long since been the fashion to scoff at these types of traditional Art; they were sneeringly condemned as enlarged illustrations; but it would be impossible to deny their accomplishment. All these men were draughtsmen and painters trained in academic schools; they were wonderful craftsmen, following in the footsteps of the masters who had preceded them. They lived in a settled world, many of them made fabulous incomes from their work, and held unchallenged sway as the accepted heads of their profession, varying their subject-pictures by painting portraits of Royalty, or records of state functions. They were outstanding figures of an age and a tradition which had endured for two or three centuries—the successors of Sir Joshua Reynolds, of Lely and Lawrence, of Constable, Gainsborough and Etty, of Van Dyck and Holbein.

The lives of the leading Victorian artists were ordered and dignified, their homes were those of very wealthy men, their studios magnificent. Here they worked, surrounded by their

treasures, secure in the knowledge that the work they produced would be bought either by public galleries or private collectors. No hint of scandal ever sullied their reputations; they were never irresponsible Bohemians, or even distantly related to the raffish irresponsibles of the Quartier Latin or Montmartre; they represented an era and type of British art which cannot, in fairness, be airily dismissed.

George Frederick Watts, R.A., did nothing to cater for popularity or the public taste. His art education in Florence had left a lasting influence on his work. He first attracted the attention of art-lovers by painting pictures and frescoes for the decoration of the Houses of Parliament, the Hall of Lincoln's Inn, and other national buildings. He even offered to decorate the grand hall at Euston Station—an offer that was refused. He became a distinguished portrait painter, and then proceeded to produce pictures based on mythological and classical themes which he approached with a poet's vision rather than with the realistic and factual outlook of Alma-Tadema, Leighton, Poynter and his other contemporaries. He was the creator of spiritual images as opposed to life-like imitation—the immaterial rather than the actual. He was also an outstanding sculptor, and the strength of his great statuary groups—particularly of his masterpiece, "Physical Energy"—was a remarkable contrast to his poetic treatment of abstract themes.

Lord Leighton, P.R.A., was a courtier, diplomat and orator, as well as a painter. It was said that he was a "born President of the Royal Academy"; certainly in appearance as well as by virtue of his wide culture and artistic gifts he filled that position with unique distinction. He had spent most of his early life abroad, studying art in Rome, Dresden, Frankfurt, Florence, Paris, etc. He was devoted to the work of the great Italians and made his first success at the Royal Academy by a huge picture, "Cimabue's Madonna carried in procession through the streets of Florence." This picture occupied the whole of one of the walls. It was painted when he was only twenty-five. In subsequent years he painted a large number of pictures, derived from scriptural and classical subjects. He is best remembered for his "Return of Persephone," "The Summer Moon," "Greek Girls Playing at Ball," and similar subjects in which he painted the nude and drapery with the greatest appreciation of beauty, and with that refinement which could bring no blush into the Victorian drawing-room.

Edward Burne-Jones, R.A., was a poet as well as an artist. He derived his inspiration from the Old Masters. He had been intended for the Church, and his pictures were always mystical and religious in atmosphere. Falling under the influence of the pre-Raphaelites—Holman Hunt, Rossetti and William Morris—he worked with them, designing stained glass, and painting murals or pictures whose subjects were drawn from the Bible, from Arthurian legend and from classical themes. He made his first great impression on the public by an exhibition at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1877, with his "Mirror of Venus," "Six Days of Creation," and other pictorial legends, which were followed later by the "Annunciation," "The Golden Stairs," "Coppelia," etc., in all of which sad, remote, ethereal maidens introduced stolid Victorians to a world of imagination and a land of visions.

Sir Laurens Alma-Tadema, R.A., born in Holland, was an infant prodigy. He was subsequently to become famous as the painter of elaborate pictures of Egyptian, Greek and Roman life. He had an encyclopædic knowledge of the architecture, costumes and other local colour of life in classical times, and his reconstructions of Roman temples and palaces, of street scenes and domestic episodes, were always "pictures of the year." His painting of marble particularly impressed visitors to the Academy, and while his technical accomplishments were the admiration of his brother artists, his subjects, which recreated "the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome," brought him immense popularity—and prosperity. His home, which he had rebuilt to include many of the features of an ancient Roman villa, was one of London's show-places. Here were the marble which he painted so lovingly, and the interiors in which he could pose his models. He designed the stage settings for Irving's "Cymbeline" and Tree's "Julius Cæsar"; for over thirty years his paintings were outstanding features at the Academy exhibitions; they were invariably bought by Galleries all over the world, or by wealthy private collectors, and his popularity was ensured by the reproductions of his works which Victorians bought so eagerly.

Sir John Millais, P.R.A., was another infant phenomenon in art. At the age of eight his drawing attracted the attention of Academicians; at nine he won a silver medal of the Society of Arts, and at sixteen he exhibited a big picture at the Royal Academy. At twenty he joined the pre-Raphaelites, and for some years showed their influence; but eventually, turning his back on

mediævalism, he began to produce such straightforward subject-pictures as "The Northwest Passage," "Chill October," "The Boyhood of Raleigh," "The Order of Release," and other popular subjects, reproductions of which were seen on the walls of thousands of Victorian homes.

Artists who respected his great talents never ceased to regret his descent to the "pretty-pretty" in such a subject as the curly-headed "Bubbles," which was bought as an advertisement by Pears' Soap. He will be remembered for his Presidency of the Royal Academy, and for his magnificent portraits, rather than for such trivialities as "Bubbles" and "Little Miss Muffet." His career covered almost every type of art—from his early pre-Raphaeelite obsession with microscopic detail, to the days when he painted popular subject-pictures and masterly portraits. He was the best-known of all Victorian artists, for his pictures always appealed to the public, and reproductions of his work were treasured in almost every home in the land.

Sir Edward Poynter, P.R.A., succeeded Lord Leighton and Sir John Millais as President of the Royal Academy. He had, in earlier days, been the first Slade Professor at University College, and Director of National Art Training Schools. He was the son of a distinguished architect and had been a fellow-student of Leighton's in Rome, afterwards working in Paris with Whistler and du Maurier, in the studio which was later immortalized in "Trilby." Among his early commissions were stained-glass work, mural paintings, sculpture, and book illustrations. Later, he embarked on a series of pictures which, like those of Alma-Tadema, found their chief inspiration in Ancient Egypt and Rome. He was a draughtsman of the classical school, and among his larger decorative paintings were those for the dome of St. Paul's. His most notable contribution to the walls of the Royal Academy was made in 1890, when he exhibited "The Queen of Sheba's Visit to King Solomon." His work varied from small cabinet-pictures to huge canvases, in which immaculate drawing and colour reached the heights of academical art.

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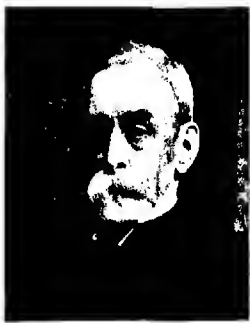
But younger men continued to challenge the academic viewpoint; the veterans were reminded that Art had infinitely greater possibilities than had been explored in the Victorian era—that it was tragic to use great talents of draughtsmanship and colour

merely to illustrate commonplace subjects; photography could surely do all that was required to record actuality; alternatively, the competent illustrator should be left to portray realism—and he could achieve in three days everything that would occupy a painter for three months. Art demanded individuality, an outlet for the full expression of a man's emotion as well as of his technical skill.

I remember most vividly the Memorial Exhibitions devoted to the works of Leighton and Edwin Abbey. The Leighton exhibition was made memorable to me, not by the artist's more famous works, but by his brilliant studies; the Abbey collection not so much by his glowing historical and costume paintings as by his pen drawings illustrating Shakespearian Comedies and Old English Ballads, which will surely never be equalled for grace and charm. But best of all, I recall the Brangwyn pictures and etchings, which filled a big house at Queen's Gate, an exhibition which added to my wonder at the range of achievement of the greatest decorative artist of modern times. Here, indeed, was adventure and daring enterprise expressed in colour!

I had watched the growing power of Augustus John, Lavery, Orpen, and other artists who succeeded the Victorian "masters," but my chief admiration was reserved, in those days, for the work of the leading illustrators. Beardsley, startling the art and literary worlds with his macabre and decadent decorative designs; Gibson's extraordinarily accomplished pen drawings; Howard Pyle's versatile technique, and the work of other artists who illustrated *Scribner's*, the *Century* and *Harper's*; the distinguished news illustrations by Frank Craig, Hatherell, Cuneo, Matania and their colleagues of the *Sphere*, *Illustrated London News*, and *Graphic*; the humorous draughtsmen of the *Sketch*, *Tatler*, and *Punch*—all of them achieving standards which I was struggling to reach.

Another notable assault on the whole structure of academic art occurred in October, 1910, when Roger Fry, assisted by Desmond MacCarthy, organized an exhibition of "Post-Impressionist" Art at the Grafton Gallery. Fry had selected his friend MacCarthy to go abroad with him and choose pictures by Cezanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh, Picasso, Matisse, and other leaders of the new movement. In a broadcast, recently, MacCarthy talked amusingly of the famous "art-quake" with which he had been associated, of his interviews with foreign dealers in Paris, Amsterdam and else-



VICTORIAN AND EDWARDIAN ARTISTS.

G. F. Watts, R.A.
 Sir Edward Burne-Jones, R.A.
 Sir John Millais, P.R.A.

Lord Leighton, P.R.A.
 Sir Alma Tadema, R.A.
 Sir Edward Poynter, P.R.A.



VICTORIAN AND EDWARDIAN AUTHORS.

Rudyard Kipling

John Galsworthy.

G. Bernard Shaw.

H. G. Wells.

Arnold Bennett.

(Photographs by Elliott & Fry)

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where, and of the sharp practice which some of them had suggested. He had returned to London with the news that several hundred pictures were available.

He wrote the preface for the catalogue—from Fry's notes—and described not only the hectic work which preceded Press day, but the reception of the works by the public and critics, who were thrown alternatively into paroxysms of rage or laughter. He walked about among tittering art critics who referred to the exhibits either as "pure pornography" or "admirably indecent." The public regarded the exhibition as a joke at their expense, and either rocked with laughter or stormed with indignation. One stout gentleman laughed so loudly that he almost had apoplexy at Cezanne's portrait of his wife, and, to quote MacCarthy, "the visitor had to be taken out and walked up and down in the fresh air for five minutes." Cultivated women went into "silvery trills of artificial laughter." All the established painters regarded the exhibits as outrageous, anarchistic and childish. The storm became positively alarming. The critic of *The Times* wrote a scarifying report; even such acknowledged authorities as Sir William Rothenstein, Charles Ricketts, Selwyn Image and Professor Tonks, who were by no means wedded to academic art, criticized the show venomously.

Roger Fry—a man who had an irresistible joy in making discoveries and who was at the same time a man of great scientific attainments—"remained strangely calm, and did not give a single damn." The men whose work met with such a violent reception are to-day regarded with vastly greater favour than are many of the academicians who were the giants of those days. A second post-Impressionist exhibition included work of many young English artists who have since made big reputations. Fry continued to attack the work of such academicians as Alma-Tadema and his "splendid marble villas made of highly-scented soap." The battle is still continuing; the academicians still have a wide public, and the post-Impressionists have been succeeded by even more modern groups, to which the public flatly refuses its adherence—or from which it turns in irritation, with the comment, "If *that's* what they call Art—I don't understand it."

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Literature, in the late-Victorian period, was also being stirred to its depths by revolutionaries—young men who were eager to

shatter bourgeois strongholds and explore new worlds. Translations of Tolstoy, Ibsen, Maeterlinck and other Continental writers were opening wider vistas, while popular story-tellers trod traditional paths.

Many of the Victorian literary giants had died, but one or two veterans remained—including Thomas Hardy, who produced his finest work, "The Dynasts," at the age of 68; Henry James, who wrote two autobiographies, "A Small Boy and Others," "Notes of a Son and Brother," and "The Middle Years" when he was over 70; and George Moore, who produced beautiful work in the three autobiographies published when he was over 60, and who continued writing distinguished prose and poetry until ten years later.

Kipling had already achieved a great reputation, John Galsworthy and Arnold Bennett had arrived, Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells were busy building Utopias, and attacking our most accepted institutions. Kipling had started writing in 1886. While assistant-editor of the *Civil and Military Gazette* in India, he published a book of verse, "Departmental Ditties." He was then only 21 years old. Books—chiefly on soldiering in India—poured from him; in the early years of the new century he added to his fame with "Kim," "Just So Stories," "The Five Nations," "Traffics and Discoveries," "Puck of Pook's Hill," and "Actions and Reactions."

Kipling was always my favourite modern author. The humour of "Barrack Room Ballads" and "Soldiers Three," the range of subject and amazing local colour of "Plain Tales from the Hills," the drama and pathos of "The Light that Failed," the mastery with which he turned from verse to prose, his command of vigorous English and his meticulous technique were always a source of wonder and delight to me. His wanderings over the Seven Seas, his uncanny insight into animal life and into the minds of children, set his pen alight, and though his Imperialism, and admiration for men of action now appears old-fashioned and "jingoistic," few can surely dispute Kipling's place as one of the finest literary craftsmen of his time—especially in the realm of the short story. In his earlier verse, soldiers spoke in their own vigorous barrack-room language; in others he would speak with Biblical grandeur or with patriotic fervour; always he was a craftsman of the greatest integrity.

John Galsworthy, born with a silver spoon in his mouth, was

also born with deep sympathy for humanity. Harrow—New College, Oxford—the Bar—and a voyage round the world, helped to form his background. He did not begin to write until he was 28. In "A Man of Property," he produced the first book of the "Forsyte Saga," a history of several generations of a family, which established his position as a novelist of distinction. The Forsyte family—first introduced to the public in 1906—provided inspiration for many of his later books and short stories, in all of which he showed a complete understanding of the patrician circles which he pictured with such genuine feeling; and a wide social conscience.

In 1906 he also made his first success as a playwright with "The Silver Box"; and if, in his plays, he underlined emotion and suffering, it was only because of his intuitive understanding of dramatic technique and of the stage as a medium of expression. His plays were social commentaries in which the unfairness of our laws and the cruelty of rigid social conventions was shown by the reactions of his admirably-drawn characters. The very titles of three of those plays—"Strife," "Justice," and "The Fugitive"—indicated the subjects which he portrayed with photographic realism and unflinching effect, and which were dramatic achievements of the highest quality.

Bernard Shaw, Irishman and rebel, had arrived in London at the age of twenty, in 1876. He began his career two years afterwards, as Music critic of *The Star* and *The World*, and later as Dramatic critic of *The Saturday Review*. Meanwhile, he was writing vigorous tracts in support of Socialism, novels with a socialistic bias, and making speeches attacking the accepted social order. His "Dramatic Opinions and Essays" were republished in two volumes, and soon afterwards he was emerging as a dramatist. Commencing in 1898 with the publication of seven "Plays, Pleasant and Unpleasant," he continued to pour out plays (with very witty prefaces) every succeeding year. By 1903 he had firmly established himself, with "Man and Superman," and had built up a reputation as a Fabian, a vegetarian, a provocative public speaker, and a playwright of genius. He was incorrigible in the liberties he took with his audiences; in "The Devil's Disciple" he turned an execution scene into ridicule; in "St. Joan" he provided a last act which was an anti-climax; he would hold up the action of a play by placing inordinately long political speeches in the mouths of his chief characters, or would write a fine romantic

drama and then wilfully disclose, in the last act, that he had been laughing at his audience. Religion, patriotism, love, all the accepted virtues, were turned upside down to provide material for a Shavian holiday or subjects for his propaganda.

At the age of ninety, he is still attacking our conventions, poking fun at our most cherished institutions, and proving to his own undisguised amusement—and ours—that as a nation we are hopelessly illogical, inconsequent, irrational.

H. G. Wells, a man with a scientific training, made his first decided success in literature by the publication in 1895 of four novels, one of which was "The Time Machine." These novels opened a new field in imaginative fiction and displayed a prophetic vision which was to secure for Wells a unique reputation. "The War of the Worlds," "The Invisible Man" and "The First Men in the Moon," and lectures to the Royal Institution were soon to be varied by stories on more domestic themes, which displayed a great sense of humour and which presented to the world such unforgettable characters as "Kipps" and "Mr. Polly." As a political pamphleteer, reformer and ardent socialist, Wells was to become one of our most notable figures, although I have always regretted that the inexhaustible range of his interests has so often lured him away from his work as a novelist.

Arnold Bennett was a Staffordshire man who came south, and never lost his sense of wonder, or ceased to be impressed by the colour and character of London. He retained a simple Provincial's delight in grandeur and wealth, but wrote about the Black Country and Modern Babylon with equal zest. He had abandoned law to embark on journalism, had become the editor of *Woman*, a post which he resigned to devote himself to literature. One of his first successes was "The Grand Babylon Hotel" in 1902; and during the subsequent years he found his material in the London scene or in the series in which he gave us complete pictures of the "Five Towns" among which he had spent his earlier days. He ranged over an astonishingly wide field. In "The Old Wives' Tale," he produced a masterpiece of sensitive observation, and in "The Card" an acutely humorous character study. Apart from his range of novels, he wrote essays, mainly on the literary life, and one or two plays, his most successful being "Milestones," in collaboration with Edward Knoblock.

Thinking about Kipling, Galsworthy, Bernard Shaw, Wells, Arnold Bennett and their numerous contemporary authors, it

seems to me that they all wrote with greater zest and "love of the job" than do the authors of to-day. They were discovering new worlds, developing individual techniques and finding a public whose enthusiasm built up their reputations, as well as their phenomenal sales.

Joseph Conrad, a Pole, who had spent his earlier years as a sailor and had become a captain in the Merchant Service, developed a mastery of English, and was encouraged by John Galsworthy to write. His first book, "Almayer's Folly," appeared in 1895. From 1900 onwards, he published "Youth," "Typhoon," "Nostromo," "The Secret Agent," and other novels of distinguished literary quality.

John Masefield—a sailor who was destined to become Poet Laureate—first attracted notice by his "Salt-Water Ballads" in 1902; these were followed by prose writing in "A Mainsail Haul," "On the Spanish Main," and "Captain Margaret," while his fame was secured by a long poem, "The Everlasting Mercy." He also wrote four prose tragedies, "The Campden Wonder," "Mrs. Harrison," "The Tragedy of Nan," and "The Tragedy of Pompey."

Conan Doyle, who had practised as a doctor for ten years, had travelled to the Arctic and elsewhere, and written four books, introduced Sherlock Holmes to the world in 1890. He produced a succession of best-sellers during the following ten years, and wrote, in 1900, a History of the Boer War. In 1902, he returned to fiction again with "The Hound of the Baskervilles," which was followed by the "Return of Sherlock Holmes," "Sir Nigel," and a play, "The Fires of Fate," after which he devoted his main enthusiasm to Spiritualism.

J. M. Barrie, who first achieved success with his sentimental Kirriemuir studies, "Auld Licht Idylls" and "A Window in Thrums," later developed a vein of fantasy and whimsy which led to "Peter Pan" and a succession of charming plays. His work from 1900 included "Tommy and Grizel"; "The Little White Bird," the series of plays—including "Peter Pan"—from 1904 onwards, and "Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens."

Readers of this period could certainly not complain of lack of literary fare, or of its variety.

Stanley Weyman, a barrister who decided that historical romances were much more fascinating than briefs, commenced writing in 1890; soon got into his stride with "A Gentleman of

France," and "Under the Red Robe," and continued throughout the next twenty years to produce cloak-and-sword dramas which had a wide appeal.

As a contrast to these recognized craftsmen, Marie Corelli began producing her best-sellers in 1886, and continued to hold her public for years afterwards with "The Master Christian," "Temporal Power," "God's Good Man," and others on familiar lines. Her devoted readers loved to hear of their idol (who lived at Stratford-on-Avon) floating along Shakespeare's Avon, in a gondola which she had brought from Venice.

Hall Caine's phenomenal success, which had started with the "Deemster" in 1887, continued uninterruptedly to the delight of a vast public and the indignation of literary critics—one of his biggest successes being "The Eternal City." His career as a popular playwright reached its zenith with "The Prodigal Son," "The Bondman," and "The Christian." Hall Caine, who had been trained for architecture but became a leader-writer on the *Liverpool Mercury*, came to London at the invitation of Rossetti. Caine was a familiar figure in Town; his appearance was modelled on the more familiar portraits of Shakespeare.

W. W. Jacobs's immensely popular Thames-side characters were first introduced in the pages of the *Strand Magazine*. He had spent thirteen years as a Civil Servant (in the Savings Bank Dept.) before he blossomed out as a humorous writer. He was not a prolific worker, but he stepped into the front rank of our humorists with "Many Cargoes" in 1896, "The Skipper's Wooing," "Light Freights," and others in later years, and the tragic "The Monkey's Paw."

Somerset Maugham's first book, "Liza of Lambeth," was published when he was a young doctor—twenty-three years old—walking the wards of St. Thomas's Hospital; but in the period which we are discussing he turned his attention to drama. In 1903 he produced "A Man of Honour"—a serious play—and from 1907 onwards scored great successes with his comedies, "Lady Frederick," "Jack Straw," "Mrs. Dot," "Penelope," "Smith," "Landed Gentry," "The Tenth Man," "Loaves and Fishes," and "The Land of Promise."

Granville-Barker also achieved fame as a dramatist and stage producer in those years. "Prunella" was written in collaboration with Laurence Housman in 1904; but in "The Voysey Inheritance" and the "Madras House," Granville-Barker proved himself

as a playwright of distinction, while at the Court and Savoy theatres, he made history as a producer of Shakespeare and Shaw.

Alfred Noyes joined the ranks of the poets in 1902 with "The Loom of Years," increasing his reputation later with "Drake," "Forty Singing Seamen," and "Tales of the Mermaid Tavern." E. V. Lucas began to charm us with his versatility and graceful craftsmanship—first with his travel book, "A Wanderer in Holland," and later with his Wanderings in London, Paris, Florence and Venice. In the intervals between his journeys he edited anthologies of poems, wrote essays and novels, and contributed regularly to *Punch*.

Hilaire Belloc—scholar, poet, historian and essayist, Member of Parliament, and wit—also produced a considerable amount of notable work from 1902 onwards, of which his first, "The Path to Rome," set a high standard from which he seldom fell. G. K. Chesterton's name was frequently linked with that of Belloc. Both were admirable writers of light verse—historians—sociologists and essayists. Chesterton began his career by reviewing for *The Bookman* and reading for publishers. He studied socialism and religion very deeply, and was a prolific and brilliant letter writer.

His first published volume was "Greybeards at Play"—a book of humorous verse, written and illustrated by himself. Later, in addition to reviewing for *The Speaker* and *Daily News*, he published, in 1900, "The Wild Knight" and other poems, which were followed by essays, books on Browning and Watts, "Twelve Types" and "The Napoleon of Notting Hill." In the succeeding years he established himself as a writer of unique individuality, and was surrounded by an ever-widening circle of literary friends. From 1905 onwards, he published "The Club of Queer Trades," a study of Dickens, "Heretics" and "The Man Who Was Thursday," and was as much in the public eye as his friends Bernard Shaw, Wells and Hilaire Belloc.

For the next thirty years he contributed to literature an immense range of poems, essays, and other outstanding work.

I saw Chesterton and Belloc frequently during my early years in and around Fleet Street—Chesterton, a huge Falstaffian figure in a black ulster, a soft hat with a jaunty brim perched on his unruly hair; and Belloc—a stocky figure—also wearing a black cloak. Both were obviously "characters," and they brought an air of the library or studio into surroundings which were rapidly becoming standardized and conventional.

I also saw the red-bearded Bernard Shaw, usually dressed in tweeds; and Anthony Hope, very formal, going to his office like any business man—imposing on himself the discipline of regular working hours while he wrote such delightful romances as “The Prisoner of Zenda.” He was the son of the Vicar of St. Brides’, Fleet Street, and after coming down from Oxford, where he had been President of the Union, he became a barrister. Romance, however, interrupted his legal career, and in “The Prisoner of Zenda” he discovered an entirely new field of romance to which he introduced us in many delightful books and plays.

John Buchan, another of the outstanding novelists of his time, was destined to become Lord Tweedsmuir, Governor-General of Canada. In his early days he had been a barrister, secretary to Lord Milner, and member of a publishing firm. He always wrote with distinction—often with nobility, and in the early days of the Great War two of his stories, “The Thirty Nine Steps” (1915), and “Greenmantle” (1916) had a vast and well-deserved popularity. After the war he completed the trilogy with that magnificent story, “Mr. Standfast,” and then embarked on a series of biographies and historical studies.

There were many other notable writers working at the beginning of the century, and even my inadequate notes will, I hope, correct any assumption that this period was one of stuffiness and drift—that late-Victorian and Edwardian literature was of little consequence.

VIII

THE GREAT WAR

IN a series of cartoons under the title "Punch and the Prussian Bully," *Punch* reminded us, at the beginning of the Great War, that Prussia had always disturbed the peace of Europe.

In 1864, Sir John Tenniel had pictured a very angry "Punch" presenting Prussia with the Order of St. Gibbet; in 1866, the King of Prussia was shown threatening Austria with war; in 1888 Bismarck was represented prating of Peace and preparing for War; while in 1890, Tenniel's historic cartoon, "Dropping the Pilot," appeared, in which the young Kaiser was dismissing his old adviser and preparing a far more aggressive programme.

The Kaiser, from the time when he wore the crown of Germany, was resolved to emulate the vastness of British power, and make Germany the first among military nations. He told his people that world power and influence were theirs by the will of Providence.

The German nation followed leaders who never lost sight of a fixed plan of aggrandisement. The Kaiser was to declare himself the protector of the Moslem peoples, to visualize a Bremen-to-Baghdad line and an overland route to India. A Franco-British alliance in 1905 was a challenge which led to constant quarrels and to vast increase in German armaments. Europe was seething with suspicions, and finally a young fanatic at Sarajevo murdered the heir of the Austrian empire, war was declared on Serbia, and the whole crazy European structure collapsed.

It was War which once more broke down (as it had done in the Boer campaign) all the barriers and class distinctions which had destroyed national unity. To a small regular army—the First Hundred Thousand—were to be added volunteers and conscripts from all ranks of life, who during the next four years were to live together, fight together, and die together.

By the end of July, 1914, the Austrian and Serbian forces were already fighting; the Austrians had bombarded Belgrade, in Germany martial law had been declared, and mobilization was imminent. France, Russia and Britain were involved, and the Cabinet was in constant session. It was realized that an occupation of Belgium and Northern France by Germany would threaten

Britain's security, and that we were bound by moral obligations to support France and Russia.

Our newspapers left us in no doubt of the gravity of the situation. Under such headings as "The Great Peril" and "Close the Ranks," the news grew hourly more ominous, and, soon after Mr. Asquith, the Prime Minister, had warned the House of Commons that the issues of Peace and War hung in the balance, we were at war.

Germany struck quickly, and, invading Belgium, occupied Liege, Brussels and Namur. The British Expeditionary Force—the "First Hundred Thousand"—landed in France, and were promptly thrown into battle. At first we heard that seven German regiments had surrendered at Liege, and, as the month passed, were cheered by news of victories for the gallant Belgians. But that news hardly presented a true picture of the situation. Kitchener was preparing, wisely, for a very long war, and, in arresting posters headed "Your King and Country Needs You!" he asked for an additional 100,000 men for the regular army. He got them; before the war was over the thousands had grown to over six millions; but before the campaign was a month old the Germans were sweeping onwards in triumph.

Our Expeditionary Force had fought at Mons, and been beaten back to Cambrai; they had to continue their retreat, with the French, to the Marne; the Belgians had fallen back to Antwerp, the fate of Brussels was sealed, and an Intercession Service was held at Westminster Abbey.

The first official news we had of the British Army was a statement by its commander, Sir John French, that it had already been in action and had incurred 2,000 casualties. By the beginning of September, the Germans were advancing towards Paris, having already given their first demonstration of "frightfulness" by the sacking of Louvain and the destruction of all its priceless historical treasures. The British armies were growing very rapidly, and Kitchener appealed for ex-N.C.O.'s to assist in training them. We were still not getting a true picture of the situation, the news alternating between gloom and fatuous optimism. The Germans were said to be retreating after their earlier successes; the Russians were triumphing; all was going well. On September 18th, my newspaper bore the headline, "Germany Wants Peace. The Kaiser willing to call it a Draw"—which did not sound convincing in view of the fact that the French government had

evacuated from Paris to Bordeaux, that the British Army had withdrawn from Mons, and that the Battle of the Aisne had begun.

Kitchener had enrolled 500,000 men, but they had still to be trained, and he was asking for another half million. Hyde Park was being used as a training ground. The official Press Bureau was exercising the severest censorship, but we were officially informed, early in October, that Antwerp had fallen, that the Belgian government had moved to Le Havre, and that German submarines had sunk three of our battleships. Mr. Garvin, in one of his summaries of the situation in the *Observer*, tried to comfort us by the statement that the loss of Antwerp was *not* a positive proof of German victory; other newspapers provided us with alternative doses of optimism and pessimism. But we did know that Lord Fisher had succeeded Prince Louis of Battenberg in command of the Navy, the German cruiser *Emden* had sunk a Russian cruiser and a French destroyer, and that we had stemmed the German advance to Calais and the sea.

Glowing praise for our soldiers, repeated statements that we were doing well, appeals for a million more men, and bold headlines, "German Attacks Weaken," carried us hopefully on to November. There was terrific fighting around Ypres, the nation was shocked by the death of Lord Roberts—their beloved "Bobs," and the fact that war had to be paid for was impressed on the nation at home by increases in Income Tax, which resulted in a man with £500 a year having to pay a tax of 9d. in the pound!

The war was also brought to England before the year ended, by the bombardment from the sea of Scarborough and Whitby. The series of battles which occupied the later months of 1914 ended, temporarily, and the first phase of trench warfare began. These battles had already resulted in over 100,000 casualties. The early weeks of 1915 brought us little news from the Front, but early in March we knew that the Dardanelles campaign had opened. Then came grim news of further fighting in Flanders, in which the enemy was giving further proof of his "frightfulness" by spraying flaming petrol on our men, during the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, which we won at tremendous cost.

The character of modern warfare was brought home to us by the official statement that, in a few days' fighting, we were using as much ammunition as we had done in the whole of the Boer War. But we were only interested in the expenditure of ammunition if it would be the means of saving our soldiers' lives.

In April, at the Battle of Ypres, a new and more horrible weapon was introduced by the Germans. This was Poison Gas, which found our men unprepared, and inflicted hideous suffering. The news became grimmer as the weeks passed. The Allies landed at Gallipoli—at tremendous cost; the *Lusitania*, an unarmed passenger ship, was sunk by our enemy, who gloated over the drowning of 1,200 men and women. Soon after, we were consoled by the news that the enemy was repulsed at Ypres; but the future looked very uncertain when Kitchener announced that the Forces were short of ammunition.

This statement roused the Press to fury and led to the establishment, a short time afterwards, of the Ministry of Munitions, under Lloyd George. Then we received further alarming news. In two months fighting at Gallipoli, our casualties had largely exceeded those of the whole Boer War. Looking to the Press, in vain, for comfort, one began to wonder wearily whether it wouldn't be better, after all, to let Fleet Street run the war, with a Supreme War Council consisting of Mr. J. L. Garvin, Mr. Hilaire Belloc, Mr. Horatio Bottomley, and the Editor of the *Daily Mail*.

There was—alas!—no "B.B.C." in those days to give us news without scare headlines; we were treated to a daily flood of omniscience, in every train, club and pub. Everybody but the Cabinet knew how to win the war—and no single strategist of the street corner or tactician of the tap-room was given his chance to save humanity. Meanwhile, the ordinary man who preferred action to talk had been rolling up in his tens of thousands—to fight. Munition workers were straining every nerve, and official figures comforted us, later, with the information that the weekly supply of high explosives to the army was nearly twelve thousand times as much as it was in the first month of the war. We were obviously "getting a move on" at last!

But still the news brought us little comfort. There was trouble among our Russian Allies; the Czar had succeeded the Grand Duke Nicholas as supreme commander of his armies; the Western Front was again ablaze; bitter fighting had broken out at Loos, and a French offensive had begun in Champagne.

And then, in October we were horrified by a further demonstration of Hun "frightfulness"—the murder of Nurse Edith Cavell, who had assisted a few British prisoners to escape. On the Eastern Front, the Russians had been compelled to retreat from East Prussia and were afterwards driven back to the Car-

pathians. In December, the British High Command was changed, Sir Douglas Haig succeeding Sir John French. The War was now costing us five millions a day; Winston Churchill, tired of inaction in his sinecure post at the Duchy of Lancaster, had rejoined his old regiment at the Front.

The year 1916 opened with the tragic news of the evacuation of Gallipoli—the climax of an enterprise which had resulted in unparalleled sacrifice and slaughter. On the Western Front our armies seemed to have settled down into trench warfare, which, however, proved to be only a lull before the storm. In February, the Germans began their attack on Verdun, while at home the passing of the Military Service Bill introduced Conscription. Intense fighting around Verdun, and the heroic resistance of the French, dominated the news for the next three months, but in June we were electrified by the official bulletins of the Battle of Jutland. At last, the German Fleet had challenged the British Navy; but there were heavy losses on both sides, and we were unable to decide who were the victors.

While we were still debating the matter, encouraged by the fact that the German Fleet had retired to its harbours, we were stunned to hear that Lord Kitchener had been drowned, in the *Hampshire*, on his way to a conference in Russia. His loss seemed to be the climax to a long story of tragedy. He had been violently attacked by the *Daily Mail* for his alleged negligence in the matter of shell-shortage; but most of us thought that the bottom had fallen out of our world when the newspaper placards announced his tragic end.

We were allowed little respite from our anxieties. Soon we were to hear the sound of the guns on the Somme; another "big push" was commencing, and our Italian allies were also advancing. But the War was to be brought nearer home to us, for Zeppelins were raiding England again. They had first arrived in 1915, when London had been bombed for four nights, but now they were arriving in greater numbers. In September, fourteen "Zepps" raided London, suffering severe losses from our night fighters—one of whom, Leefe Robinson, had been one of my Press Art School pupils. In October, another eleven of these air monsters arrived, most of them being lost in a violent storm.

The Battle of the Somme, which began in July and ended in November, 1916, broke the enemy's line between Bapaume and Peronne. It was in this battle that we introduced Tanks. Soon

after the conclusion of the Somme Battle, Asquith resigned the Premiership and was succeeded by Lloyd George. We began the year 1917 with renewed confidence, having implicit faith in the energy and resolution of our new leader; but even the "Welsh Wizard" could not achieve miracles. His first year of office began with the good news that the long siege of Verdun had ended in triumph for the French; but this good news was followed by unrestricted submarine warfare by the Germans, and we read, in February, of many Allied merchant vessels being lost. March gave us a mixed bag of news—there was revolution in Russia, we had captured Baghdad, Hindenburg was retreating on the Western Front, and our Flying Corps were incurring grave losses.

In April, we were greatly encouraged by the entry of America into the War, and our hopes were also revived by the opening of big operations. The Battle of Arras had begun; the British captured Peronne, and the Canadians took Vimy Ridge. Early in June the Hindenburg Line was breached and the Messines Ridge was stormed. The first American troops had now landed in France, and we were facing our fourth aeroplane raid on London, when 25 machines came over, unchallenged, and dropped 72 bombs, killing 34 people and injuring 140. But this incident only distracted for a day or two our attention from the larger aspects of the war, which again seemed to grow more ominous.

Winston Churchill, as the new Minister of Munitions, had begun to grapple with his grave problems: the Russian armies collapsed and a Republic was proclaimed; while Allenby advanced in Palestine, our Italian allies had sustained a defeat at Caporetto, which British reinforcements saved from complete disaster. Then we heard that the Germans were yielding ground at Chemin des Dames, and that the British had stormed Passchendaele, at terrible cost. Lloyd George gave the nation a grim survey of the general situation on the Western Front, but the year closed with the comforting news that Allenby had captured Jerusalem and that the last German colony in East Africa had been conquered. We realized that our Russian allies had ceased to exist as a fighting factor, and that the German armies who had opposed them would soon be massed against us in the West.

The early months of 1918 were clouded with anxiety. There were virulent attacks on the Premier and the War Cabinet, by the Opposition and the Press, and in March, the German attack on our armies began. Breaking through the Fifth Army, the enemy



(Imperial War Museum Photographs)

THE GREAT WAR, 1914-1918.

Top: Men of the 2nd Australian Division in a front line trench at Croix du Bac, near Armentieres, May, 1916.

Bottom: Men of the Border Regiment resting in a front line trench at Thiepval Wood, August, 1916.

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advanced twenty-five miles; Bapaume and Peronne fell; then Armentieres; and, with a wide breach into the British lines, came the darkest hours of the War.

On April 11th, Sir Douglas Haig made his now historic "Backs to the Wall" appeal to his armies, who were already facing unendurable strain and suffering appalling losses. Marshal Foch was appointed Generalissimo of all the Allied Forces; America was now pouring men into France; the heroic exploit of the Navy at Zeebrugge, which closed the Bruges Canal, gave us a much-needed tonic, but the news from the Front grew more serious daily. The Germans were still advancing; they recaptured Soissons and Chemin des Dames; the Americans adding to the troops in France at the rate of 250,000 a month; but—had they arrived too late? In June our men were exerting the last ounce of their strength and holding back, at terrible sacrifice, the enemy avalanche. Then, in July, came the incredible news that the Germans had been hurled back across the Marne.

I have been looking again through newspapers of this period, and recapturing the thrill of those July days. "New German Offensive a Fiasco. Great Assaults Repulsed" were among the headlines of the *Daily Express* when the Battle of the Marne was at its height. July 18th was "Another Bitter Blow for the Germans." July 19th announced "Foch's Great Blow on the German Flank"—a heading which was followed by the news of an Allied breakthrough to a depth of eight miles; "18,000 prisoners and 50 guns taken" were official figures which were on everybody's lips. The next day brought us further excitement—"Another 17,000 prisoners and 360 guns!" Haig had struck hard on the Amiens front, the enemy had been driven back, Bapaume and Noyon were recaptured.

In August, Lloyd George reviewed the war and announced that 6,250,000 men were in the British fighting services, another 1,000,000 Dominion troops, and 1,250,000 from India. "When the war began," he stated, "we had the smallest army of any Great Power in Europe." Our young Air Force was also playing its part in harassing the enemy. Fifty tons of bombs were dropped by our airmen on the Somme crossings and Courtrai, while another squadron were attacking German aeroplane works, at Frankfort and Metz.

In September, the long-awaited American attack began, the German lines were pierced to a depth of 5 miles, near Verdun,

and 8,000 prisoners were taken. On September 14th, Foch again struck on a 16-mile front, south of the Aisne; within a fortnight the British were closing on Cambrai, and Haig took 10,000 prisoners and 200 guns. Our other fighting fronts were also pouring in good news. Allenby, in Palestine, had captured the whole of the Turkish Army, and Bulgaria had surrendered. Soon, Haig was across the Hindenburg and Siegfried Lines, Cambrai had been reached, 22,000 more prisoners and 300 more guns had been captured.

On October 1st, Bonar Law, at the Guildhall, reviewed the story of recent Allied successes. Since July 18th, we had recovered for France 1,000 square miles of territory and taken 120,000 prisoners. The triumphs were to continue throughout the month. Every day brought a new victory. St. Quentin, Cambrai, and Laon were captured in the first fortnight, followed by Ostend, Lille, Douai and Bruges, and the evacuation by the enemy of the whole coast of Flanders. Then came the news that Ludendorff, the German Commander-in-Chief, had resigned. It was the end.

We next heard of the mutiny of the German fleet at Kiel, and the Allied Governments gave Foch full powers to arrange an Armistice; on November 7th the German high command were asking for Armistice Terms; on the 8th the German Chancellor resigned, and the Reich was in revolution; on the 9th the Kaiser had abdicated and fled, and Foch received the German envoys.

The Armistice was signed on November 11th, 1918, the terms being announced by Lloyd George, in the House. It was the day for which Britain and her Allies had waited for more than four years, and it is hardly surprising that the Nation's relief was expressed in an orgy of unrestrained joy. London witnessed scenes which recalled Mafeking night, and woke, on the morning after, to realize that the news was actually true—that Germany had surrendered by land, sea, and air, had agreed to the evacuation of the whole of Belgium, France, Alsace-Lorraine and Luxembourg, and to the handing over of their Navy, guns and all military equipment.

The German Secretary of State announced that his people were staggered by their punishment, and considered the terms as "fearful conditions." We have long since realized that those terms were fatuously inadequate retribution for the nation who had gloried in its "frightfulness," and who had embarked on its "Divine Mission" with poison gas among its weapons. We did

not forget the dreadful sacrifices which our men had made—the fact that, in the Ypres salient alone, 250,000 of our “contemptible little army” had been killed. During the second Battle of Ypres, the 28th Division alone had suffered over 15,000 casualties, its total rifle strength being wiped out, and one of its battalions being the first in British military records to “cease to exist.”

* * * * *

Having concentrated, thus far, on the major events of the Great War, I hesitate to add personal details, but no picture of those years would be complete which merely stressed its horrors, and ignored the manner in which the Home Front reacted. London was *not* a city of unrelieved gloom; although “Business as Usual” soon became a meaningless slogan, life proceeded as normally as possible. Theatres, restaurants and other places of entertainment remained open, and provided relief not only for civilians but for men in the Services who came home on leave. Musical comedies, revues and light operas enjoyed “record runs,” and such shows as “Chu Chin Chow,” “The Maid of the Mountains,” and “The Bing Boys” ran almost throughout the war, while dinners at the “Troc.” and other restaurants haunted the dreams of our friends in the Trenches.

My Great War years had been ceaselessly busy, for between 1914 and 1918, many thousands of men in the Services decided that sketching would be an ideal occupation for their leisure. Their work came to me from all the fighting fronts, and military sketching was added to my courses. My spare hours were filled as a Special Constable, my war worries were forgotten once a week at the London Sketch Club, and by evenings in Town with my friends on leave. I realize that I lay myself open to a charge of irresponsibility in mentioning trivial personal memories of this period; but the relief of lighter moments was needed, to enable us to face the ever-present strain.

I cannot forget the evening when my wife and I entertained our two oldest friends at the Trocadero Grill—a husband and wife with whom we had often shared our parties at home and in Town. On this occasion I decided that we should vary our usual cocktail, and asked the waiter if he could not introduce something a little more intriguing. He was delighted to oblige, and returned with what he introduced as four “Hula-Hula’s.” They were unexciting, and apparently quite innocuous. My friend’s wife and I were the only members of the quartette who decided to try a second.

Within a minute or two of finishing them, we both became intensely interested in each other. After twenty years of steady friendship we suddenly discovered that we were very exciting people. We revelled in each other's conversation, and, ignoring our companions, gazed into each other's eyes, talking incessantly and hilariously. This enchanting duet continued throughout the meal. I paid my bill and prepared to leave, as we were already late for the theatre. We then discovered that our legs refused to function.

We were absolutely sober, but below the knees our legs were lifeless. By stamping violently on the "Troc." carpet we managed to get some signs of life in our ridiculous limbs, and then, by continuing to stamp violently, walked to the door, still deciding that life was the loveliest kind of experience. We got to the theatre, found the curtain up, stumbled to our seats in the darkness, and continued our very happy chat until we were hushed indignantly into silence by the audience, who decided that they would vastly prefer to listen to the actors.

My wife and my companion's husband kept us quiet, the evening ended without any unfortunate scenes, and the next morning I felt no ill effects whatever. But, feeling very self-conscious about my outrageous behaviour, I decided to deal very sternly with the "Troc." waiter on my next visit. His innocent explanation was, "You asked, sir, for 'something different'—with a little kick in it perhaps. I gave it to you. Your 'Hula-Hula' was Absinthe."

Another little personal episode of the last War invades my thoughts; but I want to assure you, again, that outbursts of inconsequence or irresponsibility were very rare at a time when all our thoughts were dominated by far graver matters.

One Friday night, on arriving at the London Sketch Club, I noticed a taxi outside, obviously waiting for one of the members. When I walked into the strangely empty Club I found a well-known journalist at the bar. He had obviously been there for some time, and had been visiting other bars previously. He had a pile of new books beside him which he told me that he had to review. He was extremely fuddled. We were the only occupants of the Club, the evening promised to be very dull, and he insisted that I should share his waiting taxi, as he had decided to call on José Collins at Daly's. I wanted to meet José, so I accepted his invitation, and he staggered out to the taxi with his armful of books.

Throwing the books into the taxi through the open door, he asked the driver for a cigarette. The driver handed him an almost full packet, which my sozzled companion promptly threw into the gutter. The driver left his seat, with murder as his immediate object, but his fare had suddenly caught sight of an Australian soldier whom he invited to punch him on the jaw. The Australian was just about to oblige, when I managed to push the now pugnacious passenger into the taxi, pacify the Australian, and ask the driver to proceed to Daly's.

Immediately the taxi had started, my fellow-passenger handed me a book by a very popular author, asking me if I would like to read it. On receiving my reply that I would, he promptly hurled the book out of the window. "P'raps you'd like this?" he enquired, offering me another volume. Again I was willing to accept it, and once more a potential best-seller flew out of the window. I tried to subdue him and grab the other books, but again a new volume hurtled into the night. And in spite of all my efforts, he managed, very artfully and with great self-satisfaction, to sling the rest of the books away, one by one, during the journey. Then he relapsed into a mood of gloomy dignity, obviously disapproving of my company almost as strongly as I resented his. There was a traffic-block in Piccadilly, which gave me the opportunity of slipping out of the taxi, and disappearing.

I cannot tell you whether my friend staggered on to the stage of Daly's and joined José Collins as a star in "The Maid of the Mountains," but I can tell you that the chief actor in this true story has long since become a teetotaler.

A fatuous story, I well know; but, one of those trifles which insists on creeping into my thoughts, perhaps as a contrast to a long period which drifted sometimes from disillusion to despair, and in which the pendulum swung at one moment toward disaster and the next moment toward deliverance.

We Londoners who lived through the Great War are never likely to forget it; two years after the fighting ceased, that inspired monument, the Cenotaph, was unveiled in Whitehall, and the body of the Unknown Warrior was laid to rest in Westminster Abbey. Engraved on his tomb are words which should also be engraved on our memories:

"They buried him among the Kings, because he had done good toward God and toward His House."

"DOUBLE, DOUBLE TOIL AND TROUBLE——"

THE Witches' brew began to bubble in the cauldron almost immediately the Great War ended. The Armistice and Peace were celebrated in an orgy of excitement and relief; but in the background were uncertainty and disillusion.

The men who had left civilian life during the War, to become sailors, soldiers and airmen, very soon found themselves, on demobilization, searching in vain for the promised new world "fit for heroes to live in." There were ominous strikes among those left on duty in France, and even the "Regulars" rebelled in a camp at home. Young officers who were demobbed and without a job to go back to, had to exist on their gratuity and bounty, and look for work—which was very difficult to find. The "brave new world" was very disorganized and disturbed.

It became a period of Escapism. The Services and civilians alike sought distraction from their anxieties. Jazz music "pepped up" the jaded, dancing became a rage, social restraints were relaxed, and women as a whole grew more adventurous, emancipated and provocative. There was restlessness and reckless experiment everywhere, and the War Profiteer added to the general confusion and expense of living, while ex-officers were tramping the streets for jobs. The popular Press echoed the voice of the times. The *Daily Mail* embarked on a series of stunts which provided daily entertainment by campaigns and competitions dealing with such varied subjects as Standard Bread, Monster Sweet Peas, Paper-bag Cookery and the *Daily Mail* Hat.

The prices of everyday commodities rose alarmingly. Politicians were blamed for most of the ills from which the people suffered, extravagant spending by the moneyed few died down at the approach of an obvious trade depression—which was followed by a succession of strikes. The mining industry had to be subsidized after a strike in 1921. Reparations were a continual source of argument, and the international as well as the national tangles finally resulted in the fall of the Lloyd-George government.

Bonar Law held office for a time, until he retired, owing to ill health, and was succeeded by Stanley Baldwin, who had earned

great unpopularity by the far too generous terms which he arranged with America for the settlement of our War Debts. An Election followed, at which Baldwin put forward a Tariff policy; but the new Conservative Party which was elected was greatly outnumbered by the combined votes of their opponents, with Labour as far the strongest of the Opposition.

Meanwhile, the newspaper reader found relief from his political problems in the excitement of following various attempts by mountain-climbers, explorers and airmen to break all previous records in the conquest of land, sea and air.

Britain's absorbing enthusiasm for Sport was shown in its obsession with Boxing championships. Jimmy Wilde—a diminutive Welshman—had become a national hero when he won the Fly-Weight Championship of Great Britain in 1916, but the Heavy-Weights stepped into the limelight three years later when the American, Jack Dempsey, beat Jess Willard for the Championship of the world. Soon afterwards Jimmy Wilde added to his reputation by beating Pal Moore (U.S.A.), and a British Heavy-weight, Joe Beckett, floored the American, McGoorty. Three months later Beckett himself was knocked out ignominiously by Georges Carpentier, a handsome young Frenchman who became a public idol. Tom Webster's brilliant sporting cartoons in the *Daily Mail*, in which he referred to these much-boosted (and quickly vanquished) champions as "Horizontal Heavyweights," did much to restore the sporting public's sense of humour.

In his autobiography, "Leaves from an Unwritten Diary," that ardent little sportsman, Sir Harry Preston, devoted a lot of his space to The Ring, of which he was a constant patron. He told us that, at the Carpentier-Beckett fight—which drew what was regarded as the most distinguished audience that ever attended a boxing match—Beckett was knocked out in 73 seconds. And, to witness this contest, 25 guineas had gladly been paid for ringside seats, and 3 guineas for standing room. On a return match between these champions, Beckett "went out" at Carpentier's first punch. After this, Carpentier was matched against Dempsey, and was beaten by the American in the fourth round.

Boxing champions earned enormous fortunes from a single contest. The Dempsey-Carpentier gate-money totalled £325,000, of which Dempsey's share was £100,000. Gene Tunney was paid £200,000 for his fight with Dempsey, and a second Tunney contest in 1927 drew £530,000 of the public's money. "A long

call," Sir Harry remarked, "from the days when Tom Sayers and Jem Mace would fight all day, a hundred rounds with bare fists, for a fiver!"

Running like a thread through the news were such items as "Joe Beckett beats Bombardier Wells," "Joe Beckett beats Tom Burns," and, as a shattering blow to British sportsmen, "Frank Moran (U.S.A.) beats Joe Beckett." During the cricket season, one was never surprised to see startling news-bills bearing the two ominous words, "England's Collapse," or "England's Defeat," and to see sports addicts almost tearing the special editions of evening papers from the hands of yelling newsboys.

Nineteen hundred and twenty was a year which saw great developments in Motoring, Flying and Broadcasting. The motor-bus, the charabanc and the cheap car were becoming increasingly popular; Air Mail services were beginning to connect London with most of the European capitals; Melba broadcast for the first time; the League of Nations held its first meeting at Geneva.

In 1922, the chief names in the news were those of Carpentier, Princess Mary, Northcliffe, Marie Lloyd and the ex-Kaiser; Carpentier had knocked out two more rivals; Princess Mary was married to Viscount Lascelles; Northcliffe and Marie Lloyd had died; and the ex-Kaiser, now comfortably retired to Doorn, had married a German princess. Another wedding which was destined to have a vastly greater influence on British history took place in the following year when the Duke of York married Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon. Neither of these young people could have imagined that within a few years they would reign as our King and Queen. And in 1922 an event occurred which was destined to become a feature of all our lives—the establishment, at Savoy Hill, of the B.B.C., which, starting as a novelty associated with a crystal set, has long since developed into a wonderful world-wide service of news and entertainment.

Science and pseudo-science at the same time provoked an absorbing interest in psychology and psycho-analysis, Freud's analysis of 'phobias, inhibitions and complexes providing material for scientists and for our novelists, many of the most popular works of fiction being devoted almost entirely to sex. D. H. Lawrence, the novelist, became the literary vogue at this period, and I have a gruesome recollection of an exhibition at which Lawrence expressed his sex-ridden obsessions in paint, with (as he was an entirely untrained artist) revolting results.

One can only assume that it was unbridled vanity or exhibitionism which compelled Lawrence—a fine literary craftsman—to express himself in a medium for which he had no aptitude, and of which he obviously had little experience. He was represented at this exhibition by a series of huge canvases—varied representations of himself in association with extremely gross nude women. The most appalling of these pictures used the Crucifixion as its motif; it was a crude caricature of the red-bearded Lawrence nailed to the cross with a monstrous nude woman on either side of him. As the work was completely devoid of any artistic quality, one could only regard it as pathological evidence of the most damning kind.

The painting of these subjects surely convinced Lawrence of the immense differences between literary and artistic expression; for, while the production of a literary masterpiece has no relation to the character of an author's handwriting, every touch which an artist places on paper or canvas is an integral part of his creation; his handling of pencil or brush is the sole method by which his message can be delivered, and the craftsmanship of the artist is not acquired by accident or achieved by sudden impulse. The psycho-analysts may have found excuses for Lawrence; I could only feel disgust that an art gallery should be used by the author of "Lady Chatterley's Lover" when so many accomplished artists could have used the available space with advantage. I have only to add that the exhibition was crowded by a mob of sensation-seekers—until, I believe, the police closed the doors.

The interest in Sex was rampant; in 1923, there was hopeless congestion in the divorce courts, while the churches grew emptier. A craze for sport, pleasure and amusement swept the country; Jazz grew in popularity, with other negroid dances imported from America; night clubs multiplied until they were raided by the police, and Mrs. Meyrick—the proprietress of the most fashionable haunt—was sentenced to six months' imprisonment. Eventually, three of her daughters married into the peerage. Young Society women became "Bohemian," and an irresponsible social set, the "Bright Young People," broke into the news with stories of their Treasure Hunts and other wild escapades.

All this hectic search for entertainment inevitably led to violent denunciations of modern youth; the popular newspapers continued to be infected by restlessness, and endeavoured to provide a daily stunt as a tonic for jaded nerves; the films of the period

only added to the general hysteria. Sex appeal was looked for in the "stars," and degeneracy was the subject of many plays, Noel Coward finding ample material for his early successes in the prevailing variations from the normal code of morality. Other dramatists and authors reflected the mood of the time, the background to which was increasing political disturbance, with a volcanic Labour Party growing in influence. In the General Election of 1924 Labour came into power with Ramsay MacDonald as Prime Minister; and I have a vivid memory of this occasion.

Mr. Selfridge invariably gave an Election Night Party at his Oxford Street store, and I was included among the thousand-or-so guests. "All London" seemed to be present at these princely entertainments, where the Election results were shown and where guests could spend the intervals at a lavish buffet, on the dance floor, or in being entertained by stars of the stage. The pages of "Who's Who" came to life at these vast functions; one met statesmen and soldiers, artists, actors and authors, journalists and the people who provided them with copy. One would see millionaires hobnobbing with Labour-leaders in this gossip-writers' paradise; and most dramatic material for the social historian was provided on that night when Labour won the Election.

Down in the street below was a dense crowd watching the results as they were shown on illuminated news-signs outside the Selfridge Building. We watched them from the windows, and heard the roars of triumph as each new Labour candidate won his seat. Mr. Selfridge's guests began to grow quieter as the evidence of a Labour victory grew more obvious. George Graves assured me that the millionaire, Solly Joel, was at the buffet dribbling champagne into his beard; many other rich men wore expressions which suggested that their world was coming to an end; and as we stood at the big windows looking down at the frenzied crowd, their faces lit by the red Neon signs, I was reminded of the French Revolution—of the mob cursing the aristocrats on their journey to the guillotine. A similar thought occurred to one of my companions who was about to leave us. His parting remark was, "I'm just going to 'phone for my tumbrel."

But Britain decided to show a brave face to the world, by the organization of the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley, which

was opened by the King and Queen. In 1925, the Prince of Wales embarked on official visits to Africa and South America, which occupied him for six months, and at the end of the year British troops evacuated Cologne after their years of occupation. Britain again lost many of her famous men and women. The deaths of Lord Curzon, John Sargent, R.A., and Viscount Milner were followed in November by the passing of that much-loved lady, Queen Alexandra.

The Labour Government whose victory had provided me with so exciting an evening, only lasted ten months; and Mr. Baldwin again became Premier—to face increasing unrest which resulted in a General Strike on May 3rd, 1926. It ended on May 13th by the unconditional withdrawal of strike notices by the General Council of the Trades Union Congress.

The collapse of the strike was referred to in the House of Commons statement by Mr. Baldwin as a "victory of the common sense of the British people." It was the greatest social upheaval the country had ever known; but though it involved the breakdown of almost all national services, it displayed a spirit of tolerance and adaptability which will remain in the memories of all who lived through those historic days when paralysis was beaten by patriotism.

The strike was an attempt by the Trade Unions to impose their will and enforce their demands on the community, demands which had developed because miners and mine-owners could not settle their affairs. The community answered them by rolling up its sleeves and calmly, and with astonishing efficiency, carrying on the country's organization—its transport and food services, its newspapers and general industrial activities. "Mere amateurs" drove railway engines, buses and lorries; volunteers worked day and night to assist in the distribution of food; the newspapers, after a temporary collapse, produced news-sheets; everywhere men without any previous training tackled complicated technical jobs with remarkable success and unfailing good humour.

Undergraduates and other voluntary helpers handled food cargoes at the London docks or drove the stream of lorries which distributed their precious loads all over the country; amateurs controlled huge hydraulic cranes—500 inexperienced volunteers were soon clearing 1,000 tons of food a day. Railway engines were driven and signal-boxes operated by youths in plus-fours; tram and bus services were operated by special constables and medical

students, professional men and clerks. Emergency services of all kinds were organized to deliver goods, owners of cars, motor cycles and vans lent them for public use, and although there were, inevitably, a few ugly incidents, the public's reaction to the situation saved the nation from chaos.

I still recall very vividly my surprise on seeing a train travelling at its normal speed along our suburban line with a lad in a sweater and Oxford "bags" waving cheerily from the footplate of the engine. I was on duty as a special constable, guarding a railway bridge. After a day or so at this uneventful post I was promoted to guard a motor-bus, and had many return trips from Catford Garage to Victoria, sitting beside a friend whose Bentley rested in his garage while he drove the more cumbersome vehicle. I sat there, representing the arm of the law, wearing my fiercest expression and displaying my truncheon significantly as we passed the one or two danger-spots on our route. Camberwell and Kennington were *not* in favour of us; in these districts, angry strikers and their wives lined the walls and pavements to greet us with catcalls, to make scurrilous remarks about our ancestry, and inform us that we were bloody blacklegs.

The only objection of the amateur bus conductors to their novel job was in the matter of collecting fares. Their tendency, as temporary owners of the buses, was to regard themselves as hosts; free joy rides were their contribution to the public weal, they invariably treated customers as guests, and brightened journeys by the merriest japes; fictitious place-names, mixed with topical gags, were chalked all over the buses; the drivers would be quite prepared to alter their routes if an elderly passenger preferred to be set down at her home. Ribald greetings to the other drivers and conductors whom they passed on their routes were in the true tradition of the road; but, in spite of the informality and occasional adventure, our journeys were singularly free from accident. I decided, however, that three or four journeys over the same route could become very wearisome, and I have no ambition to become a bus conductor.

Nor do I wish to repeat my ordeal of defending the 'bus garage at Catford against a threatened attack by strikers. I was one of six special constables who were ordered to protect this vast garage and the scores of buses which it housed. We marched boldly to our posts one Sunday through a crowd of busmen whom the strike had thrown out of work. The majority of them appeared to



(F. pictal Press Agency)



(Graphic Photo Union)

THE GENERAL STRIKE, 1926.

Top: Volunteer bus-drivers report for duty.

Bottom: Troops guarding meat-lorries at Smithfield Market.

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be contemptuously amused, and their comments on "Tich," the smallest (and fiercest) member of our squad, fed the flames of the little man's martial ardour until it was difficult to restrain him from drawing his truncheon and running amok.

But we entered the garage safely, barricaded ourselves in, and, when the strikers began to rattle the doors and threaten us with unmentionable revenge, I suggested that, as additional protection, we should get the big hoses in readiness and distribute ourselves around the many doors prepared to meet our foes with the full pressure from the hydrants. Fortunately, the day and evening passed with nothing more exciting than door-rattling and blood-curdling threats—none of which, I am sure, the strikers intended to convert into action.

Elsewhere in London and the Provinces, the general common-sense of both the strikers and the public was marred by some ugly incidents. Buses were attacked, food lorries held up, motors were wrecked and their drivers mobbed, bottles, stones, eggs and assorted vegetables were hurled at the police, and baton charges had to be made in the crowds which tried to hold up traffic at the Blackwall Tunnel, in Harrow Road, and elsewhere. A fleet of police cars had to be dispatched to Camden Town to deal with a crowd of 2,000; but, when eighteen of the ringleaders were arrested, the trouble diminished. The culprits who had flung missiles at the police and motorists, attempted to drag special constables from buses, or smashed car windows, and the inevitable agitators and firebrands who incited the crowds to further demonstrations, were dealt with very severely by various fines and terms of imprisonment.

The most serious episode was the smashing of a section of railway which derailed the "Flying Scotsman," causing deaths and injuries. But such crimes were condemned as fiercely by the strikers themselves as by the public, and a characteristic note on the lighter side of the situation was provided by a football match which was played, in the Midlands, between strikers and the police. The most dramatic result of the strike was the complete stoppage of the Press, and the methods by which the distribution of news was resumed are among the most memorable stories of this period. Attempts to muzzle the Press had become apparent two days before the Strike was announced, for the printers employed by the *Daily Mail* had refused to set in type an article criticizing their Union leaders and stigmatizing the threatened

strike as a revolutionary movement intended to destroy democratic liberty.

When the Strike commenced, all the men concerned with the mechanical side of the entire British Press automatically ceased work, and the printing of newspapers became impossible. Some of the papers, anticipating this trouble, had made emergency preparations; *The Times* became a single sheet of paper printed on multigraphs; but, after the first day or two, the news-sheets, though attenuated, began to look more normal. The *Daily Mail* was printed in Paris and rushed over by aeroplane; further editions were printed in provincial centres, all linked by a network of aerodromes, served by forty 'planes. The *Daily Telegraph* shrank to a four-page quarto issue; the *Observer* to two pages; the *Daily Express* and *Evening Standard* each to a single page.

Even the production of these emergency news-sheets entailed almost superhuman efforts and ceaseless work. Journalists donned overalls, editors oiled machines, advertising managers packed parcels. An attempt had been made to burn down the machine-room of *The Times* by pouring petrol on to a bale of paper. But this and all other attempts to prevent the printing and distribution of news were unavailing. Many staffs, both in London and the provinces, slept in their offices for days on end, and I happen to know that the proprietor of *The Times* and his General Manager occupied camp beds in the Board Room, and were as happy as schoolboys in a dormitory rag.

The Press refused to submit to blackmail, and insisted on its duty and right to preserve freedom of expression; the provincial newspapers were able, when the strike collapsed, to tell stories of the use of electric street-signs to flash news messages, of clerks and office boys running printing machines, of directors driving delivery vans, of typists working day and night turning out emergency sheets on Roneo machines, and of other women tackling the intricacies of the Linotype. "Unskilled labour" performed minor miracles during this exciting nine days. I know a cartoonist who learned to set type; a house-painter controlled a stereo plant; an apprentice, aged fifteen, manned a giant Hoe press assisted by a "crew" of young messengers—and ran off an edition of 28,000 copies; reporters, when they had worked very long hours at news-gathering, mounted motor bikes and scorched around wide areas, to deliver their papers while the normal motor driver ran off further copies on a rotary printing machine.

Amid all this turmoil, the "B.B.C." News Bulletins were a godsend, and my most comforting memories of those days were of coming home from duty and hearing the calm voices of the B.B.C. announcers giving us all the available news. The most notable journalistic enterprise resulting from the Strike was the publication of the Government's own newspaper, the *British Gazette*, which reached a circulation of 2,000,000, after beginning on May 5th with a sale of 232,000. The story of the foundation of this official newspaper, in a day and a night, deserves retelling.

The Government had been fully aware of the implications of the strike, and knew that its master-stroke was to be the shutting down of the newspapers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had called the Newspaper Proprietors' Association to the Treasury to invite their co-operation in the joint production of an emergency news-sheet. The negotiations failed, but the Editor of the *Morning Post* offered to produce, on behalf of the Government and with their support, a four-page newspaper. The offer was promptly accepted, the *Morning Post* machinery and equipment was commandeered, and for a few days the paper ceased to exist under its normal title or in its old form. Its mechanical staff were forbidden by their Unions to work on the paper, so the *Daily Express* lent the services of their night-superintendent, who "set" most of the first number himself. Other craftsmen were loaned by the *Daily Mail*, and, under their direction, the editorial staff, clothed in dungarees, got to work. Leader-writers, art and musical critics, financial experts and other editorial men joined the machine-room staff, and by six o'clock in the morning, after a night of wild improvisation, 230,000 copies of the first issue of the paper had been printed.

In the final editorial which recorded this achievement, the *British Gazette* ended its short life with the statement that it had fulfilled its purpose, and that "though the achievement becomes a memory, it remains a monument."

And, it is interesting to record, it was a monument to Winston Churchill, who was Editor-in-chief of the paper. It has been stated that, during the hectic days and nights of its publication, messages reached private secretaries in Whitehall begging them to "detain the editor, on any pretext, as his devastating attack on commas and full-stops was driving the volunteer compositors crazy."

* * * * *

Social barriers ceased to exist during the strike—anyone who could do a job was welcomed; the railways used an enormous number of volunteers, 7,300 joined the staffs of the London and North-Eastern Railway, among them Lord Monkwell, who operated a signal-box, and the Earl of Caledon who worked at an engine shed. A food distribution centre had been organized in Hyde Park, convoys continually travelling to and from the Docks, escorted by armoured cars, to maintain this service. The volunteer dock labourers—undergraduates, medical students, other young professional men, and clerks—worked tirelessly. Many wore the sweaters and scarves of well-known schools or clubs; others wore drab overalls. But all played their parts humping heavy bags of flour, crates, barrels and other precious loads. Two or three men of the Welsh Guards were mounted on each lorry which carried the cargoes to Town, and, even in the streets crowded with strikers, there was little trouble. The distribution of milk, petrol, and other essentials was achieved with equal success, the supplies of light and power were maintained, and though less than a fifth of the regular railway staffs were at work, 4,000 trains were run on the sixth day of the strike. Liner sailings were practically unaffected, ships arriving and departing according to schedule, their cargoes being discharged mainly by volunteers.

I still keep by me, as souvenirs of those dramatic nine days, a sheet of foolscap, with typewritten news on both sides. It was issued on the last day of the strike, and it was the emergency edition of the *Evening Standard*. A similar news bulletin was headed *Daily Mirror*, but on the following day it appeared as a printed sheet, looking almost professional with an illustration on its front page. The *Daily Mail's* issue of May 14th, which announced the collapse of the Strike, was still only a one-sheet newspaper without illustrations.

And so the "Nine Days' Wonder" ended, the miners only remaining on strike. In the words of the *Daily Mail*, "Britain, by the manner in which she had met and defeated this internal attack on her freedom and very life, had consolidated her position in the eyes of the world." The world was to demand much more convincing proof of Britain's character, in the years which followed 1926.

"BROTHER-SAVAGES AND GUESTS"

NO picture of the troubled eight years which followed the Great War could achieve its purpose adequately if it merely stressed anxieties, political upheavals, threats of revolution, and efforts to forget larger issues in the pursuit of sport or other distractions. The background of such a picture should remind you that, throughout our wars or periods of social chaos, the vast majority of Britons endeavoured to lead their normal lives; ordinary folk worked and played; artists and authors, actors and musicians followed their professions; scientists continued their experiments; the wheels of industry and commerce turned as actively as possible; rest and recreation were necessary to all sections of the community after the day's work; men sought to share their troubles in the companionship of their cronies.

Because "I count myself in nothing else so happy as in a soul remembering my good friends," my thoughts turn from the larger purpose of my picture to consider a very pleasant feature of the social life of Britain in 1922; for it was in that year that I began to meet a group of men who lightened my burdens, who have ever since sustained me by their true friendship, and invincible spirit; and it is to pay a tribute to the Savage Club and my Brother-Savages that I interrupt my chronological record of the years—suddenly linking the past with to-day.

I have known many London clubs since my youth. The first I ever joined was The Playgoers, which was very cosily housed in a basement of St. Clement's Inn, as a meeting-place for enthusiastic patrons of the theatre and music hall. My next Club was The Golfers, in Whitehall Court, which I used with a certain awe, for I was always a hopeless golfer, and felt that I had no right to associate with the supermen who played down to "scratch." I was much more at home at the London Sketch Club, where, at the Friday Night Suppers, one could be sure of finding the most irrepressible crowd of artists who ever inhabited Bohemia.

The Club's headquarters were a ramshackle studio in the Marylebone Road, the entrance to which was once the doorway

of the condemned cell at Newgate. The Sketch Club's Friday functions started solemnly with two hours' work by the members, after which lay-members and guests would drift in for a very informal supper and for the still more informal entertainment which followed. To those entertainments, well-known actors, singers, and comedians would contribute; but the most original turns were always contributed by the members themselves, who would present every variety of unexpected (and usually unrehearsed) nonsense, varying from pageants and processions, to burlesque dramas, from "living pictures" to spoof conjuring tricks or boxing matches.

No greater contrast could be found than that provided by the Sketch Club's crazy headquarters, and the Thirty Club of London, of which I have for long been a member—and which, having no club-house has, for years, entertained its succession of distinguished guests at Claridges.

I have from time to time enjoyed the hospitality of most of the more stately Clubs—the Athenæum and Garrick, the Constitutional and the Devonshire, the National Liberal, the Reform, and the R.A.C. But the one Club above all others, to which I owe my happiest hours, is the Savage—of which I have been a member for nearly a quarter of a century. Looking back on my years of membership, I know that I shall never be able to express my gratitude to the Club which is such a unique brotherhood of the Arts. I cannot imagine what the War years would have been without the companionship of the men whom I am proud to regard as friends; life would often have been grim indeed had it not been lightened by their humour and made enchanting by their many talents. By the very nature of their work, professional men are inevitably affected by war, and yet these men have faced sudden changes of fortune with the utmost courage.

When a Savage is in trouble, he can always be sure of a helping hand; if he is ill, he will almost certainly be cheered by a "round robin" from a group of his cronies, and by the finest professional help which Savage doctors and scientists can provide; if the worries of a wartime world hang heavily on him as he enters the Club, they will vanish in the atmosphere of the North-west Room; if sudden misfortune comes, which financial assistance can relieve, Brother Savages who control the Benevolent Fund are always eager to help. If that play which a Savage has written, or in which he is acting, suddenly closes down, and the future looks hopeless,

there is immediate consolation from brother-actors who have weathered similar misfortunes. I cannot remember a time when the deep friendliness and understanding of the Savage was unable to restore my drooping spirits, and I owe the Club and its members a debt which it will never be possible for me to acknowledge adequately.

* * * * *

I have just been turning over a few Savage Club menus, which remind me of my early days as a member of the Club—to which I was elected in 1922—and of our cosy, friendly old club-house in the Adelphi, during the hour before a typical House Dinner.

I see old Odell, the "uncrowned King of Bohemia" occupying his throne in the corner of the North-west Room. He wears, with a regal air, his big, rusty-black rakish sombrero and shabby old cloak, and gazes contemptuously at his subjects, with a glass of Irish in one trembling hand and a cigar in the other. Near him is Mostyn Pigott, thin and drooping, stroking a red and drooping moustache; but behind that weary expression is a very caustic wit. That lovable soul Courtice Rounds—the original "Marco" of "The Gondoliers"—is gossiping with George Stamp; Yeend King and Dudley Hardy are talking artists' shop; John Hassall strolls in with cherubic little Charlie Hands, who looks so unlike a famous war correspondent; Herman Finck is unloading his latest wisecrack on that very expert story-teller George Graves; Walter Churcher, Tom Clare and Tommy Sterndale-Bennett drop in for a little refreshment on their way to a busy evening's engagements; James Pryde enters, in a tight-waisted horsey overcoat with a muffler. Benno Moiseiwitsch and Mark Hambourg have just come down from the card-room, Benno impassive, Mark very voluble and explosive.

Fred and Mac, the barmen, are kept very busy as other Brother-Savages and guests crowd into the little room, until the Savage war-drum summons them to dinner. A specially designed menu card has been reproduced and a copy awaits each diner; before the evening is over, many guests will go home proudly with original sketches by Savage artists in the margins of their cards.

A Savage House Dinner bears no resemblance whatever to a formal banquet. Guests are surrounded by Savages whose names are very well known to them, but who now appear to be the most carefree and irresponsible people in the world. When, at the end of a very cheery meal, coffee is served, the Chairman rises, calls

the company to order by banging a heavy club on the table, and proposes the loyal toast, "Brother Savages and Guests, the King!"

The National Anthem is sung enthusiastically; on the very last note Odell is at the door to add his time-honoured postscript—"And the best King in the whole world!"—after which he shuffles back to the bar. The Chairman gives us permission to smoke, there is an interval for the swapping of stories, for greeting friends, and for the refilling of tankards or glasses. Then the Chairman announces that Joe Batten will lead us in song. Joe plays popular choruses, which we all sing lustily, and the Chairman prays silence for Mr. Odell, who, having returned from the bar, totters toward the piano, on which he rests while informing us that, "memory serving," he will recite a passage from "The Two Gentlemen of Verona." He obliges with the entrance of "Launce and his Dog"—and proves that, though he has almost reached the age of ninety, he is still a fine character actor. In response to our encore he sings the Savage Club Anthem, "Harvest Home," assuring us, after we have joined in the first chorus, that he has never known us in better voice.

Savage programmes are infinitely varied, but, looking back on those Saturdays of twenty years ago, I can hear again Harry Dearth's rich, mellow, manly voice in "London is a Fine Place"; Courtice Pounds' beautifully clear tenor in "Take a Pair of Sparkling Eyes"; Major-Jones's fruity rendering of Chesterton's "Noah"; Ion Swinley's very moving recitation of Kipling's "Forgotten Men"; Walter Churcher's stories; Nelson Jackson's "Bolivar"; Arthur Helmore's sermons; Tommy Sterndale-Bennett's songs accompanied by himself; and Benno Moiseiwitsch or Mark Hambourg at the piano.

Those precious Savage Saturdays have been a feature of our Club's life for nearly ninety years; even when half the Club was shattered during the air-raids of October, 1941, guests were welcomed. Although the House Dinners became House Lunches, and were held in other premises while the Club was closed for necessary repairs, the Savage spirit helped our members and their friends to forget for a few hours that we were in London's Front Line. Not until the beginning of the war was the sequence of these Savage Saturdays interrupted; and then only by catering problems which made it impossible for us to offer our traditional hospitality to our guests.

The Menu designs before me are vivid reminders of those

occasions when I took the Chair at House Dinners. George Stampa pictured me carrying a make-up box and other theatrical odds and ends into our stately new home at Carlton House Terrace—a dignified flunkey pointing imperiously to the tradesman's entrance; George Strube burlesqued me presiding over rows of unoccupied tables while the members and guests took their "courses" by correspondence; Bert Thomas showed me as a pavement artist; Tom Purvis drew me in several of the disguises which I had assumed during my various "turns," and on another occasion caricatured me presiding over a Nazi Night as Percy Von Bradshaw disguised as Hitler; when John Hassall was the Guest of the Club on his seventieth birthday, John was shown by Purvis as the breezy sailor of his famous Skegness poster, dragging me along as a crumpled wreck in a bath-chair. So you'll realize that these Menu designs, drawn so willingly by Savage artists for their Brothers in the Chair, usually take a friendly dig at the Chairman's character or idiosyncracies.

The Savage has always numbered among its members many of the foremost actors, musicians, vocalists, entertainers and artists. The generosity of these professions is proverbial, and no Savage withholds his talents when he is invited to contribute to a programme. The entertainments are organized by the General Committee of the Club, assisted by the Entertainments Sub-Committee, members of which share the stage-management of the programmes. The Chair is always taken by a Brother Savage, the list of Chairmen being chosen by the Committee at the opening of every season.

During the World War, the Chair was taken on successive Saturdays by representatives of every side of the Club's professional or social activities. Among these Chairmen were John Hassall, Mark Hambourg, James Agate, George Whitelaw, Bert Thomas, A. P. Herbert, Victor Bridges, Benno Moiseiwitsch, Sir Charles McCann, Anthony Armstrong, Victor MacClure, George Bishop, William Mollison, the Right Hon. A. V. Alexander, A. G. Street, Parry Jones, Sir Stanley Woodward, Sir Louis Stirling, Jennings Marshall, Norman Allin, Nathaniel Gubbins, Shaun Glenville, Tommy Handley and Commander Norman Holbrook, V.C.

There are four fixed dates in our Savage Saturday Calendar. George Baker (our Hon. Secretary) takes the Chair at the opening Saturday of every season; George Stampa is invariably the Chair-

man at our meeting nearest to Christmas Day; "George" Strube is in the Chair at the first Saturday of the New Year, and Joseph Batten presides at the final Saturday of the season. The high spot of our Christmas Dinner for many years was the George Parlby presentation of "Good King Wenceslas," in mediæval costume. George himself made all the robes and regalia, the spears and lanterns, the casket, jewels and other decorative accessories worn by the King and his retinue. The carol was sung by the Club's vocalists, and the scene as the procession entered the dining-room by the light of lanterns or torches was very impressive, although its solemnity was often marred by George's excited impromptus when his hurriedly-rehearsed caste forgot any part of the time-honoured ritual. I was invariably entrusted with the rôle of the Page. Alas, the Good King Wenceslas pageant will never be produced again, for George Parlby—a fine artist and an authentic mediæval saint—passed away. He will be affectionately remembered by all his Brother Savages.

The Annual Dinner is naturally regarded as the most important event of our Savage year. On that occasion Members Only is the rule, and one special Guest of Honour is invited by the Club. At our 82nd Annual Dinner, in December, 1939, when I took the Chair, it was my privilege to welcome two distinguished guests—Major-General Ian Hay Beith, C.B.E., M.C., and Ian Hay. I confessed to feeling rather tongue-tied in the presence of General Beith—who was, at that period, Director of Public Relations at the War Office; but I was comforted by knowing that everybody's friend, Ian Hay, was sitting beside me.

I had called on General Beith at the War Office and he had described his job as the "War Office Shop Window"; but I reminded my Brother Savages that, before undertaking the job of making the British Army happy and the British public happy about the Army, this Jekyll and Hyde had been taking the bread out of our mouths by writing twenty-four books and eighteen plays, most of which had been obstinate successes. He had even produced three of his books—"The First Hundred Thousand," "Carry On" and "The Last Million"—in the intervals of fighting during 1914-1918, writing them on odd scraps of paper and sending them, a few pages at a time, to a publisher.

Because some of us do a bit of writing ourselves, and others were doing a bit of war work, it was a special pleasure to us to entertain that fine craftsman Ian Hay and that distinguished

public servant General Beith. In the preface to one of his books, Ian Hay had referred to the beginning of his army career as a private in the "Bug-Shooters" (his University Volunteer Corps), and mentioned his retirement from His Majesty's Forces in 1926, when he had reached "the statutory age of military decrepitude." I could not resist the comment that if twelve hours work a day at the War Office was his idea of retirement or decrepitude, Beith and Hay must have been positively terrifying twins in those far-off days when they were really active; I concluded by assuming that, in spite of their alleged senility, they still had opportunities for quiet fun by mixing up Ian Hay's comedy scripts with General Beith's very secret and confidential papers.

In acknowledging our welcome, the soldier who is a distinguished author, and the author who is a distinguished soldier gave a brilliant performance. Talking about his plays, and noticing James Agate among the Brother Savages, Ian Hay assured us that Agate had never been able to sit entirely through one of the eighteen plays to which I had referred. James, before contributing to our after-dinner programme, took the opportunity of denying Ian Hay's statement, assuring us solemnly, "*I have sat through one of Ian Hay's plays; but I can't for the life of me remember which one it was.*" He then proceeded to read what he described as a classic example of the distinguished literature of the last War—selecting a very moving passage from Ian Hay's "*The First Hundred Thousand.*"

One of our first guests when we returned to our battered home was the Right Hon. A. V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty, who afterwards became a member of the Club. Another of our official guests during this season was the Right Hon. R. G. Menzies, then Prime Minister of Australia. From October, 1941, onwards, we entertained H.M. King George of the Hellenes; Sir Edwin Lutyens, President of the Royal Academy; the Belgian Ambassador, and M. Ivan Maisky, Soviet Ambassador, whom we elected an Honorary Life Member of the Club, and who wrote us this letter when he returned to Moscow:

"Brother Savages,

"On leaving this country to take up my new duties as Vice-Commissar for Foreign Affairs in Moscow, I wish to say good-bye to all of you, and to express my thanks for the kindness and friendliness which led to your electing me an honorary member for life. I always enjoyed your gatherings,

which were so genuinely artistic, so free, so witty, and so interesting; and although I am leaving you just now, I hope that should any occasion bring me to London, I may be able to use that opportunity of mingling again with you.

"I derived great pleasure from your gatherings, as, although during the last eighteen years my occupation has been officially described as a diplomat (and some say not the worst of the diplomats at that), at the bottom of my heart I am a man of letters. But just now a tremendous task lies before us all: first, to crush our common enemy—Hitlerite Germany; the second, to build up after the war a better world than we had before it. Everyone of us must contribute the utmost that is possible to the achievement of this twofold task.

"I will do my bit in Moscow. I am sure everyone of you will do your bit here in London. So, forward to victory, and to the reconstruction of the world after the war.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) I. MAISKY."

The acknowledgment of this letter, by our Hon. Sec. George Baker, seems to me equally well worth quoting:

"Your Excellency and my dear Brother Savage,

"Your farewell letter dated the 12th September, has touched the hearts of all your brethren.

"When we elected you an Honorary Life Member of the Savage Club, we did so for three reasons; firstly, to confer an honour upon ourselves; secondly, in order to pay a graceful compliment to you as an artist; and thirdly, and most important of all, as a tribute to the U.S.S.R., in recognition of its glorious and heroic deeds in the war for the liberation of the oppressed peoples throughout the world.

"There was yet another reason, and this a personal one. During your years of office in Great Britain as Ambassador of the U.S.S.R., you were a great friend to the British people, and one who was not only admired for his genius as a diplomat but who was also loved as a man.

"Good luck go with you in your new duties, and may you always think kindly of that community of artists and scientists known as the Savage Club, where your name and memory will ever be treasured, and where there will always be a warm welcome for you when you return. We hope with all our

"BROTHER-SAVAGES AND GUESTS"

hearts that our two great nations will be allied for all time in thought, word and deed for the spiritual and social betterment of the world.

"When peace has been restored to our troubled peoples, I hope to have the opportunity of visiting Russia to see for myself her achievements in the fields of Drama, Ballet and Opera. Russia's contribution to art is greater than that of any other country in the civilized world, and her creative artists have been an inspiration to us all.

"Your Brother Savages join with me in sending you our affectionate greetings.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) GEORGE BAKER,
Hon. Secretary."

* * * * *

Not until the closing months of the War did it become imperative for us to alter our normal programmes. During the season which commenced in October, 1943, our guests included H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester, Sir Max Beerbohm, General Montgomery, Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder, Brother-Savage Sir Henry Wood (on the occasion of his seventy-fifth birthday), and the Lord Mayor of London; names which will indicate to you that the Savage Club and its members have found friends far beyond the borders of Bohemia.

"FIRE BURN AND CAULDRON BUBBLE"

REVIEWING the thirteen years which preceded the World War, I find it very difficult to recapture personal reactions or produce a convincing composite picture of that period of tumult. I do not forget that we lived through those years in a state of uncertainty; that behind our daily lives and our individual activities there was no repose; that we needed all our philosophy to enable us to do our jobs, and found no sign of peace as we looked out on to rugged, unmapped roads which stretched towards a forbidding horizon. Stability and contentment had vanished.

Speed typified the mood of the time. Aeroplane records—return flights to South Africa and Australia; strikes; hectic enterprise and competition in the motor-car industry; still fiercer, grimmer competition by leading financiers, whose activities absorbed old-established businesses; seaplane and motor races; grave unrest in India; financial crises which undermined Britain's stability; international conferences on disarmament; the emergence of Hitler and the Nazis, with ever-increasing uncertainty as to the European situation; the Italian aggression in Abyssinia; the death of King George, and the succession of his most popular son—our "Prince Charming."

Soon, the nation was deeply concerned by the new King's attachment to Mrs. Simpson, and the grave constitutional crisis of his abdication. The accession of his brother as King George VI gave us three Kings in a year—the latest of whom was destined to face responsibilities far greater than Britain and the world had ever known. Germany on the war-path; months of appeasement and irresolution, the country caught in a state of unpreparedness; war inevitable; and, at last—Britain at bay. Each year had increased the nation's uncertainty; every week, almost every day, had brought its excitement. The whole world seethed with unrest. We were living on the edge of a volcano.

Yet the visitor to Britain would have found few outward signs of anxiety. That tolerance and philosophy which sometimes drifted into fatalism, that inborn stoicism which had fortified us

throughout our history, that capacity to smile when things looked very grim, enabled us to face those years, just as it was to sustain us during the World War. We reminded each other that things were never as black as they're painted, we got on with our work, sought distraction in our sports, kept our home fires burning, cared for our children, made plans for our holidays, and carried on in the belief that it would all come right in the end. We had become a nation of shock-absorbers.

Let us see what was happening in the world outside many millions of little homes, and try to summarize the social, national and international history of those thirteen years which were the long prologue to the World War.

The year 1926 provided a history full of contrasts. Alan Cobham achieved fame, first by flying to Capetown and back—a round trip of 16,000 miles—and later to Australia and back. In April, Princess Elizabeth was born, in May the General Strike temporarily disorganized all the public services in the country. But the sport-loving section of the community were comforted later in the year by a triumph at the Oval, where England won the Test Match by defeating Australia.

Government subsidies had made a housing boom possible, huge mushroom estates grew, served by the Underground and other railways, and the speculative builder ran riot with his rows of bijou villas, which ranged from the "modernistic" to what my friend Osbert Lancaster labelled "Stockbrokers' Tudor." The *Daily Mail* Ideal Home Exhibitions were immensely popular, and their admirably-designed houses by leading architects, with the gardens in the annexe, attracted vast crowds of home-lovers. The motor-car industry was the home's chief competitor, "car or baby" seemed to be the important question which each newly-married couple had to answer. Heavy taxes and death duties were reducing the fortunes of the rich, while enterprising financiers were making new fortunes by amalgamating companies, and forming trusts, which often ended in disaster and disgrace.

Social unrest was apparent everywhere—especially in the worlds of art and music. There were revolts against realism in the former and melody in the latter. Young artists and musicians searched for new methods, new forms; "abstract expressionism" began to take the place of the traditional; and the public became more and more confused by the Cubists, Vorticists and Surrealists in art and the reformers in music and literature. Religion and

education were also targets for the reformers, and some very novel schools were established to encourage absolute freedom of expression in their young male and female mixed classes.

Nineteen twenty-seven was notable for the first solo crossing of the Atlantic by air, by Charles Lindbergh, and by the opening of the first Greyhound Racing track; but the Great War again threw its shadow over us when the Menin Gate was opened as a memorial to the 60,000 officers and men who fell in the Ypres salient. Soon, Britain was to lose many of its famous figures—including Thomas Hardy, Earl Haig, Lord Oxford and Asquith, Ellen Terry, and Viscount Haldane—men and women whose achievements had contributed notable pages to our national records.

Progress in the conquest of the Air was continuous. Four R.A.F. flying boats accomplished a 9,000-mile flight to India, Bert Hinkler flew from England to Port Darwin in fifteen and a half days, Croydon Airport was opened, Lady Heath flew to London from the Cape, Sir Alan Cobham returned from a survey flight round Africa. The year ended with the grave illness of the King, six Councillors of State being appointed. His illness and convalescence lasted until the following May. Meanwhile other famous men had died, the most notable being two outstanding figures of the Great War—Marshal Foch, and, later in the year, his colleague Clemenceau. A General Election was the climax of almost continual Party strife, and in May a Labour Government was again in power with Ramsay MacDonald as Premier, and Margaret Bondfield as the first woman Cabinet Minister.

Speed records were being broken on land as well as in the air, during 1929, Major Segrave reaching 231 miles an hour in his racing car. Seaplane races added to Britain's air triumphs, and R.101, the biggest airship in the world, made its first voyage. Less than a year afterwards it was wrecked during a storm in France, only six out of a total of fifty-four passengers and crew being saved. Among those who lost their lives were Lord Thomson, Secretary of State for Air, and Sir Sefton Brancker, Director of Civil Aviation. As a result of this disaster all airship construction by Great Britain ceased.

Between the years 1925 and 1930, financiers had become front-page news. James White, a self-made Lancashire man, having acquired a controlling interest in many big enterprises, afterwards emerging as a patron of the Turf and theatre proprietor, ended his melodramatic career by committing suicide, leaving debts of

over £600,000. Clarence Hatry was another financial magnate whose plans went awry, who was convicted of fraud, and sentenced to a long term of penal servitude. A still more startling shock came to the world of Big Business when Lord Kysant's great career ended in disaster. Gambling was not, however, restricted to spectacular deals in the City, for in 1930 the Irish Sweepstake was launched in Dublin; a year afterwards it had grown into one of Ireland's leading industries, and Britain's most popular form of speculation. It was to continue for nearly ten years, during which time it sold over £60,000,000 worth of tickets and contributed £14,000,000 to the support of Irish hospitals. Football Pools had an even wider appeal, and the Pools still continue to convert the pennies of the small "punter" into yearly sums which total millions of pounds sterling.

In 1930, the conquest of the air was still a matter of world-wide interest. Amy Johnson started her solo-flight to Australia in May, her progress being watched with breathless interest, especially the last lap of her flight over the "shark-infested Timor Sea." She accomplished her journey in just under three weeks, but her record was beaten six months later by Wing-Commander Kingsford Smith, who flew from London to Port Darwin in ten days.

The name of Mahatma Gandhi then came prominently into the news. He was the leader of an Indian movement which demanded complete independence of any control of India by Great Britain. He had led a boycott of British goods, which was followed by riots and bloodshed. A British Round Table Conference was held, and Gandhi came to England to attend it. His arrival, as a dusky skeleton in scanty native robes, accompanied by a retinue—which included, as one of his devotees, a Miss Slade, the daughter of a British admiral—greatly intrigued the public.

They could not decide whether he was a saintly ascetic, a political adventurer, or a figure of fun. He promptly usurped the publicity which had been given to record-breaking aviators and film stars. His days of silence and fasting, his diet of goats' milk, his loin-cloth and shawl were front-page copy; and, for some years afterwards, his terms of imprisonment for sedition, his hunger-strikes and other forms of self-imposed martyrdom provided stories which were of world-wide interest.

Speed continued to be the main preoccupation of designers of aeroplanes and cars, and of their pilots or drivers. Not a single

month of 1931 passed without the breaking of another record on land and water or in the air. Malcolm Campbell broke the world's motor record with 246 miles per hour, and was knighted for his achievement; Kaye Don achieved the fastest motor-boat speed record with 103 miles an hour; C. W. A. Scott flew to Australia in 9 days, and returned in 10 days; Mollison beat Scott's record by 6 hours; Flight-Lieutenant Staniforth captured the air-speed record of 408 miles an hour; Butler beat Mollison's record from England to Australia by reducing the time to 9 days.

And while Britain—unbalanced, volcanic and speed-crazy—was continuing her frenzied attempts to conquer the air, sea and land, the very foundations of her stability were being undermined. In August, there was a serious financial crisis; foreigners distrusted the value of the British pound, large sums of money were withdrawn from the Bank of England, the Bank Rate fell, and the situation became so serious that the King was recalled from his holiday; the Government resigned and a new administration was formed to institute an Economy policy, which involved wage-cuts and heavier taxes. The country went off the Gold Standard, work on the giant Cunarder was suspended, and not until two years later was it resumed, the ship eventually being launched as the *Queen Mary*.

The situation became increasingly ominous, in spite of the economies which the new Government imposed. Navy pay was cut, the pound sterling depreciated in value to about 14s., unemployment pay was reduced, and riots occurred all over the country. While new taxes and tariffs were being added to our burdens, and the international situation showed no sign of improvement, an "Anti-War" movement attracted nation-wide attention. "O.T.C.'s" were denounced, on the grounds that they developed a militaristic spirit, while a considerable section of the youth of the country devoted their enthusiasm to "hiking," and a much smaller section of older fresh-air enthusiasts experimented in Nudism. There was never a dull moment in the newspapers of the year 1931—or for their readers.

For the Press was embarking on a Circulation War, to compete for the proud title of "Greatest Circulation in the World." Each of the popular newspapers endeavoured to gain new readers by offering prizes for Crosswords and by organizing gift schemes, which involved the presentation to new subscribers of books, cameras, clothing, furniture and an immense variety of other

goods. One of the newspapers confessed, before the Circulation War finally ended, that it was spending £30,000 a week to obtain its new readers.

More record-breaking, more political upheavals, more speed, kept the nation on its toes. Speed had become the infallible tonic for jaded nerves and depression. A regular air-mail service between London and Cape Town was inaugurated; Sir Malcolm Campbell made a new record of 253 miles an hour with his specially designed car; Mollison flew from England to the Cape in 17 hours, and Scott from Lympne to Darwin in 8 days; then Amelia Earhart flashed into the news as the first woman to fly the Atlantic; Kaye Don reached 119 miles an hour with his speed-boat on Loch Lomond; Mollison made his contribution to the year's records by a flight from Ireland to New Brunswick in 30 hours; and his wife (formerly Amy Johnson) flew to the Cape and back, the outward journey taking 4 days and the homeward flight 7 days.

In the field of international and home politics, the Disarmament Conference opened at Geneva, England adopted Protection; the Lausanne Conference on Reparations and War Debts was held; three Cabinet Ministers resigned on the Government's Tariff policy; and Franklin Roosevelt was elected President of the United States.

Then the world-situation began to dominate our thoughts. The Geneva Disarmament Conference was attended by the representatives of sixty-four countries. Every phase of disarmament was discussed by technical and other committees, twenty-seven major plans were discussed, and the meetings lasted for over three years. In the very first year Japan, one of the members of the League, had invaded Manchuria, which the League dealt with by sending a Commission, under the presidency of Lord Lytton, to study the situation on the spot. The subsequent report did nothing to modify the intentions of Japan, who withdrew from the League and proceeded with its conquest of China.

But an event also occurred which was destined to influence most of the homes of Great Britain, and to extend its service to the whole world. Broadcasting House was opened as the headquarters of the British Broadcasting Corporation and of the B.B.C.'s incomparable service.

Early in the new year, the King presided over a World Economic Conference of all the Great Powers, held in the hope

of combating the world-wide depression. Meanwhile sports enthusiasts were comforted by British players winning the Davis Lawn Tennis Cup for the first time in twenty-two years, and the conquest of the air included the first flight over Mount Everest. The largest dry dock in the world was opened at Southampton, and the first anti-Jewish campaign in Germany aroused universal protest. In the autumn, Germany resigned from the Disarmament Conference and the League of Nations. Before the end of 1934 we were becoming increasingly aware of the Nazis and Hitler. In the early months there were signs of serious trouble in Austria; by July, the Nazis had assassinated Dr. Dollfuss, the Austrian Premier; on the death of Hindenburg, in August, Hitler was appointed President of Germany; in October the King of Yugoslavia and the French Foreign Minister were assassinated.

While Europe was seething with unrest, our attentions were being pleasantly distracted by Test Matches, Golf Championships, Tennis at Wimbledon, the launching of the *Queen Mary*, and the wedding of the Duke of Kent to Princess Marina of Greece. On Christmas Day, the King broadcast a Message to his People. In the course of his greeting he said, "May I add, very simply and sincerely, that if I may be regarded as in some true sense the head of this great and widespread family, sharing its life and sustained by its affection, this will be a full reward for the long and sometimes anxious labours of my reign of well-nigh five-and-twenty years?"

Four days afterwards, Japan gave two years notice to end the Washington Naval Treaty. That event was not given the thought it deserved. In 1935, the shape of things to come emerged more clearly. In January, the people of the Saar elected by an overwhelming majority that their land should become German territory, Hitler being present at the celebrations which followed. In March, Hitler announced a new Conscription Act, and later in the month, Sir John Simon, then British Foreign Secretary, and Mr. Eden (Lord Privy Seal) began an important series of discussions with Germany's Ruler.

During the year, a Peace Ballot was held in Great Britain, and ten and a half million voters out of eleven and a half millions had declared their faith in the League of Nations as an instrument for avoiding war, while nearly seven millions voted in favour of military measures against aggressors if necessary. By September, the Italian delegates had walked out of the League, and within a

month Mussolini had attacked Abyssinia. A plan drawn up by Pierre Laval for France and by Sir Samuel Hoare for Britain, virtually condoned Italian aggression, by proposing concessions which would have resulted in Abyssinia becoming an Italian colony. Britain was furious that the principles of the League and of international honour were being betrayed—and Hoare had to resign. Anger about Italy increased with their bombing, and the use of poison gas against the Abyssinians, but neither the League nor any of its members would resort to war in support of its principles. Haile Selassie, the Emperor of Abyssinia, appeared in person before the League, embarrassing all the delegates who had proved to the world that they did not propose to implement their decisions either as to sanctions or armed intervention.

War became the subject of acute controversy; a large section of the public considered war inconceivable, and demanded disarmament and retrenchment. The depression was rapidly throwing people out of employment, until their total reached three millions, the chief of the depressed areas being South Wales and Tyneside, the coal, steel and shipbuilding industries being gradually revived by—a rearmament programme! The political world was in continual ferment, panaceas of all kinds were tried, and Sir Oswald Mosley, obviously inspired by the examples of the European dictators, established the British Union of Fascists and raised the banner of "Action!" Helped by his second wife (Hitler was best man at their wedding) and encouraged by Mussolini, Mosley established an unofficial army of "Blackshirts," who speedily demonstrated their belief in action by the use of knuckledusters and other brutality to silence opposition at his meetings.

King George the Fifth's Silver Jubilee was celebrated, the unemployment situation was forgotten in the temporary rejoicings, and the King received the tributes he richly deserved from his loyal and affectionate subjects. A General Election followed, the Conservative Party came into power, and soon after the nation was shocked to hear of the King's grave illness. His life "moved peacefully towards its close" on January 20th, 1936. He had reigned for twenty-five of the most dramatic years in Britain's history, and had endeared himself to his people whose joys and sorrows he had so truly shared.

A moving tribute was paid to his memory by the Archbishop of Canterbury, in an address at Westminster Abbey on January

26th, 1936. During this address, he said: "King George himself, speaking to me about the overwhelming evidences of loyalty which his Jubilee had brought forth, used some words so characteristic of his honesty and humility that I cannot refrain from repeating them. I seem to hear him say them now. 'I am sure I cannot understand it, for, after all, I am only a very ordinary sort of fellow.' "

The affection which the King had inspired, and the nation's sorrow at his loss, were shown abundantly in the days following his death. Enormous crowds lined the streets of London through which his body was borne on its journey to Westminster. I stood in Kingsway as the *cortège* passed; his sons, headed by the new King, walked bareheaded behind the gun-carriage which bore the coffin—that gun-carriage which had borne the bodies of Queen Victoria and Edward VII. Later, I was one of the three-quarters of a million who filed past the catafalque in Westminster Hall on which the dead King lay in State. It was the most solemn and magnificently impressive scene I have ever witnessed.

Officers of the Guards stood with bowed heads, as still as statues, with a Yeoman of the Guard at each corner of the dais; the coffin itself was draped in purple, on which were placed the Royal regalia, the Crown, the Orb and the Sword. For four days Guards and Yeomen kept their vigil, and the late King's subjects passed silently through the Hall. Some sections of the crowd had waited patiently for eight hours or more to pay their last respects, and later waited in the streets throughout the night to witness the passing of the "very ordinary sort of fellow," King George V, from Westminster to his last resting-place in St. George's Chapel, Windsor.

He was succeeded by his son, who, as the Prince of Wales, had for some years been the most popular young man in the world. Our "Prince Charming" was henceforth to be known as Edward VIII. Meanwhile the international situation had been growing rapidly worse. In March of that year the Nazis—being sure that Britain would not interfere—occupied the Rhineland, and Britain was torn between the need for urgent rearmament and the cause of pacifism, which had so many adherents, and which was headed by the Peace Pledge Union. In July, the Spanish Civil War began, Franco being helped by the Italians and Germans, and by a section of British leaders who favoured Franco's Fascism as against Communism.



(Fox)

THE LYING IN STATE OF KING GEORGE V.
Westminster Hall, 23rd January, 1936.

A greater and more personal shock to the nation—and the Empire—was imminent. In the early months of 1936, Fleet Street, the Clubs, and other centres where the latest news is discussed, began to hear stories of the King's friendship with a Mrs. Simpson—a married American lady. Mrs. Simpson's name had appeared occasionally in Court circulars, but to the public she was unknown. The first definite hint of trouble—a suggestion that the King's behaviour was likely to lower the prestige of the Crown—came in a sermon by the Bishop of Bradford, who called upon the King to follow the example of his noble father.

The Press could keep silent no longer, and the public was staggered to hear that the King intended to marry Mrs. Wallis Simpson, who had already divorced two husbands. At first, newspaper readers were incredulous; for years they had speculated on the King's marriage, and had read of his rumoured engagement to each of the European princesses in turn. But—"Mrs. Simpson!" Who was she? Early in October, Mr. Baldwin received a vast quantity of letters from Britain, the Dominions and America, and a situation arose in which the Government was compelled to discuss the situation with the King himself. But it was not until early in December that we were all made aware of the seriousness of the situation.

Under the heading, "Grave Constitutional Crisis," newspaper readers were informed that "a constitutional crisis of extreme gravity has arisen out of a conflict between King Edward VIII and his Ministers. His Majesty has refused to accept the guidance of his Ministers, in matters affecting his private life. The storm which has been brewing for many weeks, broke out last night." On the following day all the world was informed of the King's intention to marry an American lady. Abdication was hinted at, and it was officially announced that there were no precedents for the voluntary abdication of a monarch in England. Abdication—of the most popular young man in the world, who had succeeded to the Crown!

A "fictitious dialogue" by Bernard Shaw appeared in the *Evening Standard*. It was entitled, "The King, the Constitution, and the Lady," and it envisaged precisely the problem which had to be solved. On the same day, the Prime Minister made a statement in Parliament as to the possibility of the King's marriage. He dealt with the popular assumption that, if the King decided to marry, his wife need not become the Queen. He corrected this

view by stating that no such thing as a morganatic marriage was known in our Law—and that no question of altering that Law would be entertained by the Government. Such a change, Mr. Baldwin added, could not be made without the consent of the Dominions, whose assent would not be forthcoming. On the same day, the Premier had an audience with the King at Fort Belvedere, and informed him of the views of the Dominion Governments.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Simpson had crossed to the Continent, *en route* to the Riviera. The drama was, by this time, attracting a world-wide audience. The Press of the Empire was unanimous in recording the gravity of the crisis; many newspapers appealed to the King to make the supreme sacrifice, to keep inviolate the prestige of monarchy, and continue his great career of service to the Empire. Other newspapers, all over the world, devoted great space to considering whether Mrs. Simpson, an American woman of forty years, who had twice been in the divorce courts, was worthy to be the Empire's Queen. "Seldom in our history," said one London newspaper, "have the peoples of this country and the Dominions spent a week-end of greater anxiety and suspense." That statement was the simple truth.

There were special prayers, in churches of all denominations; the Archbishop of York prayed for divine guidance of the King and his Ministers; South Africa expressed the strongest views of all the Dominions, and declared that it was the King's duty to realize that the Monarchy was of even greater concern to the Empire than the Monarch. In Australia, Mr. Hughes, a Cabinet Minister, issued a statement that the mere possibility of abdication by one who was universally loved and trusted, shocked, alarmed and grieved them beyond the power of words to express. Thousands of people assembled in Downing Street to wait for news, and sympathetic cheers were given for the King; the crisis had already become almost unbearable; it was occupying the Cabinet for almost every moment of the day and night. Mr. Churchill pleaded in the House for more time and patience—more sympathy for the King who had for many weeks been enduring the greatest strain.

Meanwhile, the Press and public discussed little else, debating every possible aspect of the case. Mrs. Simpson issued a statement from Cannes, which read that she "wished to avoid anything that would hurt or damage His Majesty or the Throne, and was

willing, if such action would solve the problem, to withdraw forthwith from a situation which had been rendered both unhappy and untenable."

That gesture, which was greatly appreciated by the public, raised their hopes that the mysterious Mrs. Simpson would herself solve the situation. On the following day, the Premier spent five hours with the King, the Duke of York and the Duke of Kent also being present. The King's secretary called on the Archbishop of Canterbury, Mrs. Simpson's lawyer flew to Cannes—and still the tension grew. On December 10th, there were rumours that abdication had been decided upon; Queen Mary had talked to her son; there had been meetings of the Cabinet which lasted from early in the day until 2.30 on the following morning. And then, on December 11th, the blow fell. The King's "final and irrevocable decision" was conveyed in a message to Parliament and to the Governments of the Dominions and India.

He announced his Abdication. His message, read by the Speaker, contained these passages: "After long and anxious consideration I have determined to renounce the Throne to which I succeeded on the death of my father, and I am now communicating this, my final and irrevocable decision. The burden which constantly rests upon the shoulders of a Sovereign is so heavy that it can only be borne in circumstances different from those in which I now find myself. My mind is made up. Moreover, further delay cannot but be most injurious to the peoples whom I have tried to serve. I take my leave of them in the confident hope that the course which I have thought it right to follow is that which is best for the stability of the Throne and the Empire, and the happiness of my peoples."

Mr. Baldwin addressed the House and, greatly moved, gave an account of the events of the past few weeks, of his many talks with the King and of the steps which had led to the Abdication. The Premier referred to an interview, on November 16th, after a decree nisi had been pronounced in the Simpson divorce case, when he told the King that marriage would not receive the approval of the country. "Then His Majesty said to me," continued Mr. Baldwin, 'I am going to marry Mrs. Simpson, and I am prepared to go.' To which I replied, 'Sir, that is most grievous news. It is impossible for me to make any comment to-day.'"

The King sent for Mr. Baldwin again on November 25th.

Meanwhile a compromise had been suggested—that Parliament should pass an Act enabling the lady to be the King's wife without the position of Queen. The proposal was put to the Cabinet and the Dominions, who were unanimous that there was no prospect of any such legislation being accepted. The King remained adamant; but Mr. Baldwin paid a high tribute to his dignity—and his anxiety that his Abdication should be accomplished with a little disturbance to Parliament, to his people, and the Crown, as possible. Mr. Baldwin's long and grave speech was delivered and heard with the deepest sympathy and emotion.

And so King Edward VIII, after a reign of only 325 days, ceased to be the Sovereign of Great Britain, of the Dominions, and Emperor of India; and on the following day his brother acceded to the Crown as King George VI. The last message which Edward VIII delivered to his people was a broadcast on the evening of his Abdication—a dignified, human, very moving farewell; after which, he left the country—to be known henceforward as the Duke of Windsor.

Mr. Baldwin, in his final statement to Parliament during the passing of the Abdication Bill said: "Though we have this duty to perform, we can never be unconscious of, and shall always remember with regard and affection, the wholehearted and loyal service that His Majesty has given to this country as Prince of Wales, and during the short time he has been on the Throne." The Press were equally generous in their tributes, in the sympathy with which they dealt with the crisis, and in their praise of Mr. Baldwin for his handling of a crisis of unparalleled difficulty.

The anxiety of those days has almost been forgotten, and the country has been rewarded by the reign of a King and Queen who have fulfilled their duties with dignity and tireless devotion. Nineteen thirty-six was a dramatic year in British history. Three Kings had reigned over us. On January 20th, King George V had died. Within eleven months, two of his sons had occupied the Throne, and George VI was destined to face, with courage and a high sense of duty, the most dramatic years in the history of the world.

His Coronation in May, 1937, was an unforgettable demonstration of affection for a courageous, upright, honourable young man, about whom not a word of scandal had ever been uttered, and who in his home and public life had already proved that he was destined to prove an ideal King. The King, the Queen and

their daughters, have long since endeared themselves to their people as members of a perfect family.

The King had immediately to face responsibilities and anxieties far heavier than any which had been borne by his predecessors, beginning with social upheavals, unemployment, continued disaffection by Labour, and increasingly ominous developments abroad. Winston Churchill—out of office—had warned the country in 1934 of the increasing militarism and warlike plans of Germany, and particularly of the phenomenal growth of her air force. Baldwin's vague statements induced a feeling that all was well. He was succeeded as Premier by Neville Chamberlain. The Spanish war was still in progress, China was engaged in fighting the warlike Japs, who were achieving a succession of victories; Britain was comforted by her Naval Pact with Germany, and Chamberlain was busily pursuing a policy of appeasement.

In March, 1938, the Nazis occupied Austria. Meanwhile, Britain went about its daily work and made preparations for its summer holidays; Hitler's name became increasingly familiar in newspaper headlines, and the public continued to be philosophical and optimistic. But the international situation became more serious daily. Peace obviously hung on a thread.

Chamberlain delighted the country by his courageous trip by air to Berchtesgaden. A plain British business man, stepping on board an aeroplane for the first time, wearing a bowler hat and carrying an umbrella, was about to talk sense to an obviously daft Dictator. The Prime Minister returned without any apparent result, and made a second journey a week later. There was an unhappy feeling that we were about to make dishonourable concessions, to sacrifice the Czechs for the sake of Peace. Then, after anxious days that developed into something like panic, Chamberlain arrived home with a scrap of paper which he waved triumphantly to the frenzied crowds. It was—*Peace!*

But on the morning after, and as the months rolled by, it seemed a very uncomfortable peace. It began to look very like appeasement—and dishonour. Hitler grew more autocratic every week, and Mussolini followed suit. Italy bombarded Albania; we began to realize that the situation was increasing in gravity; but most of Britain decided to risk taking its summer holiday. Parliament had to meet in the middle of its summer recess. And on September 1st, Hitler invaded Poland.

War was now inevitable. It began on September 3rd, when

Chamberlain announced in a sad, tired voice, that we were at war with Germany.

So—that was the end of it all! Those years in which, occupied by our own private and personal problems, we had hoped that the League of Nations and world influence would preserve the Peace, years in which few of us imagined that any nation could—after the tragedies of 1914-1918—deliberately plan another war. No Briton, of whatever political bias, could regard war as a sane method of settling international quarrels, few could take seriously the posturings of such obvious megalomaniacs as Mussolini and Hitler.

The most articulate section of the public had derided the need for rearmament until it was too late, and we found ourselves at the mercy of Dictators drunk with their dreams of world domination. Churchill had warned us, and the Government had snubbed him for scaremongering; a group of young pacifists at Oxford had supported a resolution that they would *not* fight for King and Country; the majority of people prayed for peace and lived in a state of foreboding, while the Left and the Right expressed their diametrically opposed Party views.

When the country had awakened to the realization that war was inevitable, it rushed to dig trenches, queue up for gas-masks, and consider the need for air-raid shelters. Sandbags, barbed wire and anti-aircraft guns appeared in London, as Parliamentary debates made us more and more aware of our unpreparedness. Parents began to evacuate their young children to "safe districts," barrage balloons dotted the skies in and around London.

THE WORLD WAR

WHILE trying to record the larger incidents of Britain's history between 1918 and 1939, I could hardly turn aside to discuss my personal adventures or consider the impact of twenty-one troubled years on my work. That story was told at considerable length in my autobiography, "Drawn from Memory," and I only summarize it briefly now, to avoid confusion in the completion of my picture.

The Press Art School had emerged from the Great War with a considerable reputation; I had extended my courses of instruction, and produced a publication, "The Art of the Illustrator," which demonstrated the technical methods of twenty leading artists. In 1923, I was able to take a trip to America, and, on my return, embarked on the preparation of a book on "Art in Advertising." The interest in art study continued until 1929, when the slump which almost overwhelmed Britain, and the end of a false prosperity boom in America, resulted in international trade depression and mass unemployment.

Art necessarily suffered, and my school work diminished; but, early in 1930, my friend George Royds, the head of a most successful Advertising Agency, invited me to co-operate with him in the development of his work. I remained with him for eighteen months, and then once more returned to Art teaching. In 1933, I was approached by the Sun Engraving Company to join them for special work which would also give me time to control my school. I joined the "Sun," and am still associated very happily with them.

Meanwhile, my son had spent his schooldays at Lancing, which he left to join the staff of the *Daily Telegraph*, and my daughter, having completed her education in Paris and at a Secretarial College, started a career which was subsequently to lead, during the war, to her becoming Secretary to a Cabinet Minister.

Your war years, though they have been dominated by burdens and perils which we have all been called upon to share, obviously differed in many respects from my experiences. We have seen History being written, and played our parts in it in a million different ways.

From the time when our troops landed in France in September, 1939, until the evacuation from Dunkirk in June, 1940, I followed their progress with special personal interest; because my son Peter was among the tens of thousands of young men who, loathing war, had considered it imperative to give their services in so righteous a cause. He had joined the R.A.M.C. before the outbreak of war, and wrote us most vivid letters during the long period of preparation before the battles. The letters grew more dramatic as the Hun Blitzkrieg suddenly started in May, 1940, and increasingly ominous as Holland collapsed; the enemy broke through and made our aerodromes in France untenable, the French front was smashed, Boulogne and Calais were isolated, Belgium laid down her arms, and what remained of the British and French forces had to fight its way back to the coast.

At this period, my son's letters ceased, and we had to watch the increasing gravity of the situation without any knowledge as to whether he was alive or dead. For three weeks that anxiety grew, and, as the final days of the Dunkirk evacuation were passing, the miracle of deliverance was, I confess, dominated for us by one thought. Finally, and at the eleventh hour, we had a message that he was safely home—among the very last of the 300,000 British and Allied soldiers who had been rescued by the strangest, most gallant armada that ever sailed the seas.

I have told that story of my darkest hours of the earlier years of war in "Drawn from Memory." In its pages I have also recorded my experiences in London's Front Line during our baptism of fire which began in September, 1940, and lasted until May, 1941. Between September and November we had continuous bombing for fifty-seven nights. In three months nearly 13,000 civilians were killed and 20,000 seriously injured. I happened to be on duty, at the "Sun" headquarters, on the night of May 10th, 1941, when, from the roof of their building I was involved in the last great air-raid on London.

Within a stone's throw was St. Clement's Danes Church, converted into a blazing torch, the sparks from which were falling on our roof; behind me the House of Commons Chamber was being destroyed, and firemen were fighting to save Westminster Abbey; the British Museum, the Law Courts, the War Office, the Mansion House, The Temple, and the Tower were burning. One of the "Sun" buildings was burned to the ground, in spite of our efforts to save it. On that night 420 tons of bombs fell on London, 1,436

Londoners were killed, 1,700 injured, and the fires were still raging two or three days later.

That period of bombing, fire-watching and sleep-snatching, included the narrow escape of my family, when a bomb fell 50 yards from our dugout—as a result of which our gardener was injured and spent three months in hospital. During the long series of air attacks on Great Britain which ended on that grim night in May, 1941, 43,667 civilians had been killed—among them 5,460 children under sixteen years of age—and over 50,000 people had been seriously injured.

We had been saved from annihilation by the heroism of our fighter pilots during the Battle of Britain—who shot down 185 Hun aircraft in a single day—and by the morale of our people, who truly deserved Winston Churchill's tribute: "I see the damage done by the enemy attacks; but I also see, side by side with the devastation and amid the ruins, quiet, confident, bright and smiling eyes, beaming with a consciousness of being associated with a cause far higher and wider than any personal issue. I see the spirit of an unconquerable people."

That spirit was being manifested in all corners of the globe where Britons were facing, alone, mighty and ruthless enemies. France was out of the war; in the Middle East, Wavell was fighting against tremendous odds; Malta, making history by her heroic defence, was only relieved at the last moment when her people were reduced to two biscuits and a little water each day; our seamen were engaged in a deadly struggle against Hun submarines, our Island was almost powerless to resist a threatened invasion.

But Hitler and his allies had already made three fatal mistakes. He had omitted to strike at us after Dunkirk, when we were virtually unarmed and at his mercy; instead, he had attacked Russia. He had retired from the air-battle of Britain. And Japan had swooped down on Pearl Harbour and brought America into the war. But we still had a very hard struggle before us in Europe and the Far East. Of all our reverses, I think I felt the fall of Singapore in December, 1941, as the biggest blow to our pride. That this great bastion and naval base could be overrun so quickly was horrifying, and I was personally concerned because a girl who was one of our dearest friends had left our family circle, just before the war, to be married. She settled down to an idyllic life with her husband and little daughter when, almost without warn-

ing, the Japanese bombs fell. I know that her adventures were typical of tens of thousands of British experiences in the Far East, but I feel impelled to tell her story because it brought a far-distant war so close to us.

The Japs moved with incredible speed through Malaya; within two months Singapore became untenable, and the women and children were ordered to leave—which they did in a bug-infested, overcrowded ship. They had been bombed incessantly in Singapore, morning, noon and night for nearly two months, and found themselves—fifteen hundred women and eight hundred children—compelled to leave their menfolk and seek safety. The ship was bombed frequently on the voyage between Malaya and Java, but a week later reached Colombo and then sailed again for an unknown destination, which proved to be South Africa. Meanwhile, her husband had escaped at the very last moment, and reached Bombay. They were separated for many months, but at length were reunited in Egypt—and have since returned safely to England.

There were many thousands of similar personal adventures—all part of an infinitely wider story; mighty chapters could be devoted to those grim days when our North African bases were lost, and only the Channel protected us, when Wavell and Cunningham were fighting to prevent the Mediterranean becoming an Axis lake. We watched Hitler and Mussolini rubbing their blood-stained hands and waiting to divide the spoil. But while we watched, our hopelessly outnumbered sailors, airmen and soldiers, fought. Defeats in Greece and Crete left them bloody but unbowed; they fought untiringly and against seemingly hopeless odds, until they were gradually joined by Russia and America. Rommel was beaten in Egypt, and Japan held at the very gates of India; our seamen took precious convoys to Russia, and with the ever-growing aid of America, beat down the submarine menace; we saw, after weary months of waiting, our great invasion forces landing in North Africa, Sicily and Italy, and were rewarded by Mussolini's downfall. Then, four years after Dunkirk, the British and American forces crossed the Channel and stormed their way into Europe, for the last battles of the World War.

The landing in Normandy, the recapturing of France, and the lightning advances to Germany itself, over the old battle-grounds of the last War, brought the war to its end. Every Allied sailor,

soldier and airman who played his part in this titanic struggle has cause for undying pride. Every man and woman in factory or shipyard, on the land or in any form of national service, contributed to this victory. We whose age or duty kept us at home can also feel quietly proud that, at times, we were able to play our part in the battle. Many tributes have been paid to the men and women on the Home Front, but I treasure this cutting from an *Evening Standard* leader which was published on the fifth anniversary of the war:

"The stretch of coast from which the Germans launched the terror weapon that was to win for them the long and desperate Battle of London, will soon be lost to them. Our Imperial City will at long last be liberated from the horrors of her nightmare war. The Battle of London has been no side-show. If she had wavered then, the Reich of a Thousand Years might have become reality. Our losses alone reveal that we have suffered: 60,000 citizens of London have been killed; more than 100,000 wounded; few among us have escaped the onslaught without some loss or injury. Hundreds of thousands of our homes have been destroyed and wrecked; our treasured possessions blasted and defiled. The heart of our City has been swept by fire; her noblest monuments lie in ruins. There will be no joy-bells rung for the liberation of London; no flowers strewn, nor wine-casks broached. It is a fact that the world will accept as calmly as it accepted the fact of our resistance. The triumphant citizens of London, in the days of her liberation, send their greetings to the men across the Channel. She is shabby and battered, but her heart is warm. She has a welcome waiting for them."

On the Fifth Anniversary of the war we were given grim news of the price we had to pay for Victory. The casualties to all ranks of British Empire forces had totalled 925,963. Of these, 242,995 had been killed. But these terrible figures did not include civilian losses or casualties to merchant seamen. The Merchant Navy alone lost 29,381 killed. And the end was not yet in sight.

* * * * *

The outstanding event of the war was surely the Invasion of Europe—a subject which had dominated all our thoughts for months before D-Day. The Germans had previously trumpeted their convictions: "Hold the Ports, and we hold Europe. No army could invade Europe successfully without possessing, from the

very commencement, Ports through which to pass huge supplies of guns, tanks, ammunition and food." Britain agreed. The Allied Plan of Invasion had been settled at the first Quebec Conference, and it had been decided that prefabricated harbours should be made in Britain and towed to the Continent. A Minute by the Prime Minister to the chiefs of departments who were faced with the construction of these harbours said:

"They must float up and down with the tide. The anchor problem must be mastered. Let me have the best solution worked out. Don't argue the matter. The difficulties will argue for themselves."

W.S.C. 30/5/42.

Britain promptly embarked on the design and construction, in the United Kingdom, of two Ports which were subsequently taken to Normandy. One of these Ports was for the use of the British, the other for the Americans. This achievement, from the outset, was camouflaged under the code-name of "Mulberry."

The work was commenced by the designing of a scale-model. The model was constructed by sappers, working at the War Office under the Director of Ports and Inland Water Transport, the sappers basing their design on information supplied by aerial photographs, and an infinite amount of detail as to the rise and fall of tides, character of beaches and coast, etc., obtained during many hazardous secret landings, by Commandos and Rangers. The story of "Mulberry" has since been told in a multitude of ways; in the newspapers, by a memorable broadcast, "The Harbour called Mulberry," by the Ministry of Information Film "A Harbour goes to France," and by an "Exhibition of Mulberry, the Prefabricated Port," which was held in the early weeks of 1945 at the Institution of Civil Engineers.

It was this exhibition of models, photographs, diagrams and information, which gave me the most comprehensive picture of a miracle of British enterprise and engineering skill. The whole complex story was simplified and explained so that the least intelligent layman could understand its main details. A printed notice at the entrance read, "Just as many ingredients go to the making of a Christmas cake, so is a port built up of many items or ingredients. Here are some models of those ingredients. They were all especially designed for the construction of those immense Ports."

One saw photographs of Early Trials Experiment Depots, in which full-sized piers, floating bridges, concrete floats and spans were tested on calm and rough seas. Towing trials and the

erection of experimental ramps for unloading vehicles and armaments were parts of these tests. In the subsequent Final Trials, surge-towers were used with experimental bridges, telescope spans designed to replace the surge-towers, a "mooring shuttle" developed from a mooring bridge. These experiments began in the autumn of 1943, and were only completed a few days before D-Day. But the amount of work involved was super-human—and the size and complexity of the organization can only be dimly realized by a mere recital of figures. The work was allocated to twenty-five main contractors, and a host of other firms in all parts of the country.

Among the jobs undertaken was the building, in under six months, of one hundred and fifty huge concrete caissons. There were six different sizes of these caissons, varying from 7,000 tons each to 2,500 tons *each*. The purpose of these giants was to serve—when sunk—as outer harbours or breakwaters. Not only had these caissons to be built in England, but towed, an average of 125 miles, to the Normandy beaches. First, a series of block-ships were taken out and sunk—fifteen veteran hulks whose last hours were their finest; then the caissons; thirdly, the pierheads and roadways. Eight stores pierheads had to be connected with the shores, each by two floating roadways over a mile long; and when the whole job was completed, the area of "Port Arromanches" covered over 1,300 acres.

The material for the Port was towed over by four hundred tugs; the convoy included Liberty ships, coasters, hospital ships, tanks, landing ships, D.U.K.W.S. and cruisers; the whole, with the fighting ships, forming the biggest Armada in the history of the world. There was an almost outrageous originality of mind and spirit behind this achievement.

None of the thousands of labourers who had worked on these caissons had the slightest knowledge as to what they were intended for; some of the old Liberty ships had to be fitted with new engines to carry them on their last journey; the giant caissons, which only travelled at three miles an hour, were perfect targets for Hun aircraft; but on top of each mysterious hulk—as the Luftwaffe discovered to their cost—was a formidable battery of anti-aircraft guns, while our air forces and those of the Americans dominated the skies above them. Some losses were inevitable on our journey to France, but the plan as a whole was completed with triumphant success.

On the morning of D-Day, our first assault-troops went ashore, and the rest of the gigantic programme was carried out with few serious hitches. As the work proceeded, the growing harbours were continually protected by Allied fighters, by a phenomenal concentration of anti-aircraft batteries, by a forest of barrage-balloons, and by the battleships. When the block-ships had been dynamited and sunk in their allotted places, the caissons sunk neatly in their assigned positions, and the steel floats and bridge-piers placed according to plan, the Port began to function. On D-Day plus 10, the docks were already established and were busy unloading; on D plus 13, the two great Ports were practically complete; and only then were they faced with their greatest trial of strength, for on this unlucky day a great storm arose which speedily grew to gale force—and lasted three days.

The American port was entirely destroyed; the British port, though severely damaged, stood the storm bravely, and work continued with very little interruption, hundreds of tons of goods being unloaded. The result of this mighty "Mulberry" was that a million men, with their armour and supplies, were landed on a coast where previously no port existed, and began to fight their way through Caen, Falaise, and onwards—to Berlin.

"Mulberry" was a comprehensive national effort, in which the War Cabinet with their experts, a multitude of men in the Services, designers, engineers, steelworkers and labourers, combined to do a job of incredible difficulty in inadequate time. It was the result of long months of planning, of innumerable Commando raids on enemy shores, and of those earlier ill-fated attacks on Dieppe and St. Nazaire.

From the time of the Quebec Conference in 1943, only six months were allowed for completion of the two Ports, each the size of Dover Harbour—at a time when shortage of labour, tools and transport was particularly acute, when enemy bombing still did its deadly work, when bad weather added to the trials of men and women. By D plus 28, in spite of the gales which had raged a fortnight earlier, and had wrecked the American port, the millionth Allied soldier was landed, and the Invasion of Europe was in full swing. Britain had done another job of work—in secret.

Sir James Grigg, the War Minister, introducing the Army Estimates in the House of Commons on March 13th, 1945, gave the country further details as to the gigantic organizations which preceded D-Day, and which had proceeded since.

"I remember," he said, "being present, a month or six weeks before D-Day, at a conference where the land, sea and air commanders expounded their plans and gave out their provisional orders. General Montgomery put on the wall a large map showing where he expected the Anglo-Canadian-American Forces to be at D plus 90. Somewhere about D plus 80, I was visiting the General at his field-headquarters. The work of destroying the Germans trapped in the Falaise pocket was nearly finished; the Americans were up to the Seine at Nantes. The dispositions of the Allied Forces were, in fact, almost exactly as they had appeared on the map I saw at the preview; but the position of the Germans was quite different. They had stood and fought on the wrong side of the Seine; a great part of them had been destroyed, and the way was open for a rapid advance beyond the Seine to the very German border. I do not think that any further compliment is necessary to those who planned this classic enterprise."

Describing the later stages of the campaign, Sir James said that the whole northern sector of our line, including the American Ninth Army as well as the British, Canadian and Polish forces, was placed under the command of Montgomery, who had been promoted to Field-Marshal.

The plan was that the Canadian Army—strengthened with additional divisions until about two-thirds consisted of troops from the United Kingdom—should clear the country between the Maas and the Rhine southwards, while the United States Ninth Army was to attack from the direction of Aachen, with its thrust line towards the Rhine at Duesseldorf. Concluding this part of his story, Sir James said: "The position now is that the Allied armies have closed up to the Rhine from Coblenz to north of Emmerich, that they have crossed it at one point, and that the north bank of the Moselle is rapidly being cleared of the enemy."

"Our forces are preparing for the task of crossing the Rhine in force. I cannot say how many of the enemy have been killed or so seriously wounded that they will never fight again—certainly many hundreds of thousands. I do know, however, that prisoners alone already number more than a million."

* * * * *

Considering these achievements, I recall an interview I had with General Montgomery at his London headquarters before D-Day, and of his quiet confidence and serenity. He gave no hint

of inflexible will, or the consuming energy and ruthless discipline of the iron-jawed martinet; he was entirely free from pomposity or self-importance. He emphasized, throughout our talk, the human factor in war, and his conviction that wars were not won by machines, but by men; and he stressed the supreme value of a commander keeping in the closest personal touch with all ranks. He had taken his men into his confidence since the earliest days at Alamein, and throughout the fighting which took the Eighth Army to Italy.

I subsequently paid a tribute to this great soldier in my book, "Nice People to Know," and also had the good fortune to discuss, with Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder, Deputy Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force, his views on the use of the air-weapon. General Eisenhower had stated, "I have no doubts, whatever, that Tedder is one of the few really great military leaders of our time." And this leader, with whom I spent some hours, both at his home and at Supreme Headquarters, explained to me how our hard-won air supremacy was maintained.

I had known that he started our air offensive in the Middle East, with less than a hundred planes, and that by the time he had finished his work, Tedder's forces and his methods of using them had blasted a way from Alamein to Salerno, and had destroyed 10,000 enemy aircraft. His handling and development of the air arm, his genius for using it in collaboration with the other Services, and his unique strategical gifts, have since played an outstanding part in the planning of Victory. I shall not forget the photographs he showed me, of our pin-point bombing of enemy targets in Germany, as a prelude to Invasion. That prelude was to develop, as we all know, into a mighty crescendo, which grew in power until most of Germany was converted into rubble. It was Tedder's brain and vision that was behind these triumphs.

In March, 1945, General Eisenhower paid a striking tribute to the effect of bombing on Germany's war economy, in a message to Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Harris, C.-in-C., R.A.F., Bomber Command. His message read: "I have just returned from a visit in the Julich-Duren-Muenchen-Gladbach area. As the Allied armies advance into the former industrialized area of the Rhineland, they are everywhere confronted with striking evidence of the effectiveness of the bombing campaigns carried on for years

by Bomber Command, and, since 1942, by the Eighth Air Force. The effect on the war economy of Germany has obviously been tremendous: a fact that advancing troops are quick to appreciate, and which unfailingly reminds them of the heroic work of their comrades in Bomber Command and in the United States Air Forces. I should like all your units to know that the sacrifices they have made are to-day facilitating success on all fronts."

Air Chief Marshal Harris replied: "Through five years and more of strenuous endeavour to build up the bomber force, and simultaneously to operate at ever-increasing tempo to the crescendo of these last few months, my crews have been sustained, despite all difficulties and in face of the heaviest casualties, by the sure knowledge that the path of the Allied armies on all fronts would be smoothed the more by our every attack. Throughout these past five years my crews have fought ever harder and ever deeper into the very heart of the enemy's every war resource. The full effects of this long-drawn and bitterly contested campaign, yet to reach its peak, only now reveal themselves as the Allied armies enter Germany. The reward which we have sought is to know that, in these ruins, the armies already recognize a major cause of their own comparative immunity from the long-drawn agonies and the fearful casualties of the last war."

But Bomber Command would be the last branch of the Air Force to claim all the praise for the devastation of Germany. The Tactical Air Force, under Air Marshal Sir Arthur Coningham, working so closely with Montgomery's and Bradley's armies, did superb work in constant support of our advancing infantry and armour. Built on their early experiences as the Desert Air Force, they covered our Armadas on D-Day, and since gave the closest co-operation to the British and American Armies of Liberation, by maintaining supremacy in the air and by ceaseless and relentless non-stop bombing of enemy communications.

Working together with our ground forces, fighter-bombers isolated and immobilized the nearest enemy formations, plastered the territory for 150 miles behind them, stopped reinforcements and supplies, and broke up counter-attacks. It was the Tactical Air Force that covered our armies from the Channel to the Rhine, helped to starve the enemy of his supplies, and reduced enormously the casualties which our ground troops would have suffered. When it is realized that, during the Battle of the Somme in the last war, 60,000 British troops were killed in a single day, one

realizes the debt which the Allied Nations—and especially their infantry—owe to their devoted comrades of the air.

I attempted to obtain an idea of the Navy's work in the war, by bombarding my friend A. V. Alexander, the First Lord of the Admiralty, with a layman's questions. "A. V." a Brother-Savage and a genial Somerset man, explained simply that his job as head of the Senior Service—which he had held twice in his career—was equivalent to that of Chairman and Managing-Director of a vast organization concerned with training and manning the Navy, building and arming the ships, victualling, stores, finance, and every detail of supply and organization. The War Cabinet, with its naval experts, plans strategy and war policy; the Board of Admiralty implements these plans at sea. It is the First Sea Lord, Chief of the Naval Staff, who is responsible for the fighting efficiency of the Fleet and its operations; and subordinate to him are Vice-Chiefs, Deputies and other high officers, who are directly in control of training, manning, tactics, fighting efficiency, designing of new ships, supply of machinery and armaments, and *other questions*.

We all know that the Navy provided the world's largest Armada for D-Day, that it has been "occupying its business in great waters" ever since the outbreak of war; that it has protected all our sea-routes, supplied all the Allied armies, and saved Britain from starvation. But even these achievements only touch the fringe of its ceaseless activities. The story of the Navy's and Merchant Navy's work in the war can never be adequately told, and it is impossible to select, from the myriad stories which have added glory to the history of Britain's sea-power, any which will begin to express our indebtedness to the Senior Service, without whom the country and the Empire could not have survived.

Let us now consider, for a while, the fortunes of war on the Home Front.

XIII

FLYING BOMBS AND ROCKETS

"Flying bombs were sent over Southern England, including the London area. Some casualties and damage were caused."

*(Official News Bulletins,
June-August, 1944)*

I AM able to add some authentic details to those examples of official reticence, for Forest Hill—the London suburb in which I live—was one of the flying bombs' favourite targets, and my home only one of the many casualties. We were on the direct route from the Pas de Calais to London, the alternative route via the Thames Estuary also crossed us, and it was above our heads that—five miles short of their obvious target—the bombs very frequently developed serious mechanical faults.

One bomb flamed venomously over our roof-top, with a roar like the grinding crash of gear-changing in a thousand wornout lorries; it cut out, and fell on to our railway station, killing seventeen passengers who were sheltering in the subway, and wounding many others. Within a little while, the railway was again hit, less than a hundred yards away from the first bomb; our main shopping centre was devastated, and other bombs fell indiscriminately around, razing comfortable villas to the ground, rendering many of our friends homeless, wrecking a club, a vicarage, rows of workmen's cottages, and other "targets of military importance." On three separate occasions, Tudor Hall, my Press Art School headquarters, suffered such minor damage as blasted windows and doors and broken ceilings, and I had to spend some hours clearing the debris; but such troubles were trifling compared to those of many of my neighbours.

Sudden tragedy tore out of the sky at six hundred miles an hour and blasted other parts of our Borough—a hospital, a crowded store, and a busy market-place, adding to the total of casualties and distress. Eighteen bombs fell around our home withing a radius of eight hundred yards, creating such cumulative havoc that the local authorities for a time found it impossible to house the homeless and give relief. The disorganization grew as

the "incidents" in the borough multiplied; private enterprise had to step in with temporary assistance; and my only comforting memory of this grim period was of my friend Tom Gibson, a born organizer and a Major in the Home Guard, who found very practical ways of tackling our urgent local problems.

His activities began one evening when he passed through a street of small houses which had been wrecked during the previous night by one of Hitler's no-longer-secret weapons. Tom saw the inhabitants standing around helplessly; rain was coming down in torrents, and, having discovered that the local authorities had been unable to help them, he took the law into his own hands, collected a contingent of his Home Guard, borrowed lorries and an assortment of tools. Shattered garden fences were promptly used as temporary shutters for gaping windows, other rough-and-ready repairs provided primitive shelter for blitzed victims, and he then began to organize more important forms of relief.

By the next night, seventeen of the homeless families, with the remains of their possessions, were transported by lorry to friends who had offered them hospitality—some of the seventeen households being taken as far afield as Tonbridge. This improvised relief work continued through almost hourly bombing until, one evening, Gibson's own very attractive home and many of his neighbours' houses were wrecked.

I found myself helping in the removal of furniture and chattels, clambering over broken staircases and beams to salvage what remained of treasured possessions, travelling on lorries which deposited the sad remnants of homes into empty garages or unoccupied shops—and discovering that long-neglected muscles could still be goaded into action. Tom Gibson's help to his neighbours, and the co-operation of his comrades of the Home Guard, continued, there was little pause while he was trying to find a home for his own goods and chattels; his days were occupied by a responsible job, and his evenings ceaselessly commandeered by the many folk who made urgent claims on his very practical sympathy.

My efforts to co-operate with him were interrupted one Saturday when I heard that the London headquarters of the "Sun," at which I worked, had been badly wrecked. Tom promptly left his local work for an hour or two to see if he could help me in Town. He did. A flying-bomb had fallen at eleven o'clock on the previous night. The staff had long since departed,



(Fox)

AN "INCIDENT."

London, 1944.

(To face page 146)

leaving only the customary squad of fireguards on duty. They were in the basement when the bomb crashed on to the premises next door, which burst into flames.

Fire also broke out in the foundry of the "Sun" building, and opened the sprinkler-valves. The electric lights immediately fused, but with the help of torches and candles the fireguards got to work. Before they were able to turn off the valves the Commander was soaked through, and was soon wading with his colleagues through pools of water, which were added to by the fire-brigade, who were promptly on the scene. The manhole in the basement had to be broken before the water could be drained away—and many other things claimed the attention of the small, soaked staff.

One of our Directors arrived at eight o'clock in the morning, to find the grimy guards still working. A contingent from the "Sun's" Watford works were soon on the way—two other Directors, with their colleagues, a lorry load of engineers and other assistants and equipment. When I reached the scene of the incident, many familiar landmarks had gone completely. An incredibly wide area of the neighbourhood had been devastated. The whole of the older portion of the building was a tangled ruin, and the surrounding premises had disappeared. I found my way to the back entrance of what remained of the building, through a little court leading from a neighbouring street, and there saw our Director and his architect standing in the middle of the ruins, grimly discussing the problems involved.

The new portion of the building appeared to be intact—structurally—but the window frames were twisted, and only here and there held fragments of jagged glass; broken ceilings had emptied laths and plaster over floors, beams and joists had collapsed and added to the confusion. Inside the building one saw the full extent of the ruin. The oak-panelled main office and the Directors' rooms looked as if they had been struck by an earthquake. Half the roof had emptied itself into the chaos below; desks, typewriting machines and office equipment were buried underneath piles of debris. There was destruction everywhere.

A metal file-cabinet had been hurled into the chaos blocking the entrance to what had been my office. I trod, fell, and managed to slide—very ungracefully—down its incline into the rubbish heap, and reached £150 worth of original drawings on my table. They were sodden with dirty water, but I passed them out to a waiting colleague, and then tried to open the drawers of my

desk, which had stuck. These were only removed later, with their soaked contents, by being hammered out, burglar-fashion, from the back. A dozen or more men were close by, attacking the piles of broken glass, timber, stone and plaster. An artist and I spent hours trying to clear the studio. If our work with shovels, brooms and dustbins was less experienced than our handling of a pen and brush, we did our best; if we wilted somewhat after hours of work with our colleagues, lugging heavy furniture up and down staircases to our new quarters in an adjoining building, we wilted in a good cause, for all around us were members of the staff—men and girls—diving into jobs without pause. And Tom Gibson helped.

Everyone worked to the limit of his, or her, powers in an endeavour to straighten out the chaos, so that normal work could be resumed on the Monday morning. I shall not forget the tired, grimy face of the fireguard commander who trudged home, still wearing his water-logged clothes, after thirty-six hours of duty, or the way in which our Directors, executives and staffs rolled up their sleeves and tackled their many problems.

On one floor, cameras, screen and lenses were wrecks; etching-baths, routers and other equipment were beyond repair. In the artists' room, unfinished sketches and completed drawings were in sodden disorder. In the composing-room, masses of type had been hopelessly "pied," and cases blasted; the "Mono-room" was a junk-heap, and the foundry considerably the worse for wear. The despatch department and the basement had escaped—except for shattered windows. The water which had poured through the building had disappeared down the manhole, leaving on floors and staircases the residue of sticky mud.

On the Monday morning the dusty peace of a Dickensian office—long neglected, with cracked walls and broken windows—was disturbed by the arrival of a dozen bombed-out evacuees. They were the firm's representatives, and their luggage included filing cabinets, typewriting machines, desks and a range of modern office equipment. The strange visitors, welcomed with old-world resignation, soon took possession; the old rooms, waking from their sleep and blinking under the glare of unaccustomed electric light, tried to hide their shabbiness, and took their place boldly in London's Front Line. Meanwhile, engineers, carpenters, electricians, and other workmen were swarming over the less damaged parts of the main building which the representatives had been compelled to evacuate.

After forty-eight hours of systematic salvage, it was discovered that sufficient equipment and floor-space were available for the handling of very urgent work. Seven cameras had escaped, the nucleus of a mounting plant and much of the foundry machinery was being adapted and moved. Gradually, order began to emerge from chaos, and, two days after the calamity, the Chairman of the Company addressed the following message to several members of the staff who had expressed their sympathy with him and his fellow-Directors:

"In these dark days, your letter signed by so many friends is very welcome, as I know you all genuinely feel the great blow that has fallen upon us. You can rely on the Management doing all in their power to 'get the wheels going again,' but there will be many delays and setbacks. However, I know we can rely on your patient sympathy, and in the meantime the cry must be, 'Never Say Die.'"

A week later, my home was a casualty. It was a blazing summer evening, my week's work in Town was over, and I was very tired, for I had been working in dust and discomfort, in a grimy temporary office with cracked walls and windows, engineers, carpenters and labourers creating an unceasing din all around, and clouds of dust billowing from the rubble-choked street beneath.

The siren had sounded while I waited in a bus queue (the Hun invariably tried to catch London's millions during the homeward rush-hour), and three bombs fell while I waited on London Bridge station. As I was on the last stage of my journey, trudging from Forest Hill station to my home, a local air-raid Warden met me outside his house and invited me to join him in a drink. I asked to be excused, as I wanted nothing so much as a deck-chair in my garden. He was most pressing, and led me to his door with the suggestion of a whisky and soda. "You'll want it," he added. "Don't worry—your family is quite safe—but your home has been badly blitzed. A bomb dropped sixty yards from your house a quarter of an hour ago."

I asked him if I might postpone that whisky and soda, and left him very hurriedly. Before I reached home, I saw evidence of that bomb; neighbouring roofs, windows and doors were shattered and my neighbours were busy shovelling up their debris. My home had most definitely "caught it." My wife, her sisters—and Tom Gibson—were already at work, and, after assuring myself that they were safe, I changed and got busy. The flagged path

leading to our front door was littered with tiles, broken glass and debris. What remained of our lead-lighted windows was either twisted like wire or distributed over our lawn. The roof was a muddle of scrambled tiles, holes disclosed gaping rafters, and broken laths; most of the doors were blasted out; but the worst trouble was inside the house. All but three of the ceilings were down, their plaster littered over beds, carpets and furniture; cupboards had pitched forward, emptying their contents on to the chairs; china and glass were entangled with smashed pictures and torn curtains; soot covered the rugs. My wife assured me that Tom Gibson had arrived, from the nearby house which was his temporary home, only a minute or two after the bomb had dropped. He had seen it fall, and knew that it was far too near for "Merrowdown's" safety.

Having comforted my family—in the dugout which he had built for us, and to which they had rushed for safety—he promptly rolled up his sleeves. This was the kind of job with which he had become very familiar; he had battled with too many similar "incidents" to be baffled by ours. The clearing of the chief debris occupied us all until darkness fell, our work being interrupted by repeated sirens and the need for taking shelter until further bombs had screamed past us. For the next four days we were all very busy, assisted for a couple of days by my son, who managed to get leave from a sympathetic colonel to help us. After clearing the larger piles of debris, and emptying them into the road, stripping the rooms of furniture and carpets, and restoring some kind of order, we dropped into hot baths, slept in the dugout, fed in the wrecked summer-house, and carried on again.

We had our consolations. The weather was fine throughout those strenuous days, the gas, water and electricity were still functioning, and the Office of Works, who had a repair squad in the neighbourhood, came promptly to our aid. On the morning after the incident, three very efficient carpenters—a Scot and two men of Devon—started on temporary repairs to our windows, hacking out the remnants of our lead-lights and filling the frames with black or white waterproofed material; then they patched and rehung our two main doors. They were followed by three Lancashire youths who, stripped naked to their waists, clambered over our roofs, in the gayest of spirits, shouting music-hall songs as they hurled broken tiles in all directions. Whenever we were near their danger-zone we had to shout a warning, or dodge a tile.

They left three days afterwards, still shouting, to give their exciting alfresco entertainment to another blitzed householder. As souvenirs of their visit they left several gaping holes in the roof, through which the sun streamed into our derelict bedrooms, and three tarpaulins, weighted with tiles, which hung insecurely over unfinished sections of their handiwork.

A day or two later, a real tiler came along, examined their craftsmanship with disapproval, and proceeded to do the work properly. After four days of furniture-shifting and general labouring, I went back to the "Sun" and to my School, to deal with arrears of work and arrange for a surveyor to inspect our battered home. When I returned home I found the tiler still busy, with a very vocal mate, whose theme song was Will Fyffe's "I Belong to Glasgae." Apart from the fact that another bomb had fallen near us and blasted out our only remaining window, all was well. We had settled down to using a patched-up summer-house as our dining-room and the dugout as our bedroom; my wife and her sisters became accustomed to sweeping up the bare rooms into which the broken ceilings continued to shed plaster.

But my wife will never forgive Hitler for his diabolical assault on her pantry. For, when she tried to open it, an hour or so after the bomb had fallen, she had to force the door, which was blocked. Practically all the contents of her precious store-cupboard had been hurled from the shelves, and converted into a coagulated mound of jams, pickles, sauces, preserves, broken glass and china, into which she had to force her way before it could be removed. My stoical resignation was tested still more severely by the pile of twisted metal which littered our lawn; for it was part of the flying bomb which had caused all the trouble.

Before I close this simple story of a typical Home Front incident during the latter part of the war, I want to thank the Office of Works for introducing me to the young tiler from Middlesbrough. He was a very efficient craftsman, and his only grouse against life was the calamitous effect on his income of "Pay as You Earn." He assured me that when he first received the official notice of this attempt to rob him of part of his wages, he sent the paper back with a curt note which read, "I'm not joining. I'll have nothing to do with it." He suspected shrewdly that the scheme was a crooked Club organization which wanted far too much of his money. His later thought was that the idea promised to be such a source of profit that he was "a mug not to start one." And

he was not greatly comforted when he realized that he was only one of millions of victims of an iniquitous tax which—though it might be used to pay for the war, reduced his earnings to 1s. 5½d. an hour. I assured him that we were all more or less in the same boat, and that I also looked forward to the happy day when my burdens would be lifted by a benevolent Government.

When London had endured eighty days of bombardment by flying bombs, Duncan Sandys revealed, in the House of Commons, some of the gruesome details of the ordeal—from which we learned that 8,000 bombs had been launched, of which 2,300 had reached the London area, causing 92 per cent. of the fatal casualties. Fighter planes had destroyed 1,900 of the bombs, the balloon barrage had accounted for 2,000, and our anti-aircraft guns shot down 2,800—figures which answered the public's assumption that little was done to protect them. On one day, of 101 bombs which were launched, 97 were brought down by our defenders. By the end of the period 75 per cent. were being destroyed, and only 9 per cent. reached London. Our anti-aircraft defence was the biggest concentration of guns we had ever had in any one place in this country; but, up to August 4th—a month before the attacks died down—the fatal casualties in the London area were 4,350. Fifteen "alerts" had been sounded in one twenty-four-hour period, including one of over seven hours.

It became obvious from Duncan Sandys' further information that the fight against the flying bomb had been waged secretly for over eighteen months before the public was made aware of Hitler's secret weapon. Espionage had revealed that long-range weapons were being prepared, their launching sites were systematically sought out, and over 100,000 tons of bombs were used to destroy them. These attacks had involved the loss of 2,900 British and American pilots and air-crews; and the destruction of the sites had delayed the launching of the flying bombs for several months. But the damage and destruction they caused could not be repaired for many more months; over 500,000 Londoners were bombed out; and my own home, with its temporary windows and ceilings, its cracked walls and carpetless floors provided complete evidence that we were among the minor casualties of Bomb Alley.

Hitler, not satisfied with his failure to break the spirit of London, tried again—with V2's—a rocket 46 feet in length, with a diameter of 5½ feet, and a weight of 10 tons. It travelled at 3,000 miles an hour—and for 60 miles into the sky—until it began

its downward flight. Five minutes after it was launched it reached its target, "somewhere in Southern England." To be more precise, V2's landed in many parts of London; but though, as a war-winning weapon, this monster, which took twenty years to perfect, was another of Hitler's ghastly failures, it proved a considerable anxiety to Londoners who had already endured over five years of war; and it brought tragedy to many previously blitzed homes.

London and its suburbs, suffering severely from V2's, looked, with special anxiety, for some news from the Government, which would give them hope that the menace would soon be countered. But Sir Archibald Sinclair, speaking in the House of Commons on March 6th, 1945, could only explain the difficulties of attacking the V2 sites.

The launching site of a V2 was small, hard to identify, and cunningly placed. We might know that certain areas near a town or village in Holland were being used. To send bombing squadrons to obliterate that town or village would destroy the lives and homes of hundreds or even thousands of our Dutch allies, who were already suffering terribly. The Germans who operated the rockets would emerge from their deep shelters when the bombardment was over and either carry on their nefarious work elsewhere, or clear a space and continue to operate from the devastated town.

By attacks on storage sites, supply routes, motor transport parks and lines of communication we were reducing the scale of attack far below what the Germans hoped to achieve. But with the rocket, as with the flying bomb, the only decisive answer was the actual occupation of the sites from which these weapons were launched. The primary aim, therefore, of the R.A.F., in close co-operation with the Army, was to hasten the paralysis and destruction of the German armies on our front and consequently the liberation of Holland.

Our air superiority had not been obtained without heavy fighting and heavy casualties. Between April 1st and September 30th, 1944, Bomber Command alone suffered more than 10,000 casualties in killed, wounded and missing. Sir Archibald was, however, able to reveal that the percentage of casualties had become progressively lower, owing to the mastery of the air achieved over Germany and the battle area. In 1942, the bomber squadrons lost 4.1 per cent. of the aircraft dispatched; in 1943, 3.7; 1944, 1.7; and in the first two months of 1945 only 1.1,

although an increasing number of operations had been carried out by day. Meanwhile, "in Southern England, including the London area," we were well aware that "casualties and damage were caused." To which official information I would add personal evidence that Tudor Hall was given another opportunity to make itself useful—as a furniture repository for local V2 victims.

For a long time, the Government, for security reasons, had to keep the Germans in ignorance of the precise results of V2 as a weapon of war, and we had to face the ordeal of this gigantic rocket arriving, without warning, at any moment of the day and night. At last, at the end of seven months, the story was told. The enemy had during this period launched 1,052 V2's, killing 2,754, and seriously injuring 6,523 civilians. The rockets had been aimed at London, but a large number had fallen in the Home Counties. So each horrifying and much-boasted weapon weighing 10 tons, and by which the Germans had hoped to terrorize us, had killed, on an average, 2.7 civilians, and injured 6. In one 24-hour period, 17 rockets had fallen, one of the most serious of all the incidents occurring at New Cross, two or three miles away from us; the missile fell on a Woolworth store during the lunch-hour shopping rush, when the store was crowded and the pavements outside thronged—principally by women and children. In a split-second, 160 people were killed and 108 seriously injured; another tragic death-roll was caused by the rocket which fell, during a busy shopping-hour, on Smithfield Market, when 110 people lost their lives and 123 were seriously injured.

Each explosion could be heard as far as ten miles away, and as no news was released, London seethed with rumour and speculation. London had to prove, once more, that she could "take it," to mourn for the tragedies and devastation which had been caused and to realize that the long ordeal was not yet ended. There were many long roads still to travel on our journey to Peace.

AFTER FIVE YEARS

AFTER five years of war the Government decided to reveal some of our wartime secrets to the world, and Britain was at last able to read the story of her own achievements—in a formal White Paper. It proved to be a story of superhuman endeavour and organization, of tireless self-sacrifice, of a nation's dedication to a great cause, of a total war effort greater than that of any other belligerent, even greater than Russia's.

Mr. Brendan Bracken, Minister of Information, when introducing the White Paper, said: "A lot of unfair criticisms have been directed against John Bull's war effort. We don't want to blow our own trumpet, particularly if anyone else will do it for us. Critics who have not gone through the agony of Britain under bombing and dull monotonous food, ought to live here, and they would not be quite so vocal.

"What stands solidly behind the statistics in this White Paper is the courage and unexampled sacrifices of millions of British people. Hardly a home in Britain has not been churned up by the war. There have been something more than 22,500,000 civilian removals since war began. Families have been broken up and scattered all over the earth, fighting or toiling in factories. Within Britain itself homes have been uprooted by mass movements of population, there has been the exodus from the southern and eastern coasts, evacuation from London, the direction of workers to factories far away. This has happened to people who, of all people in the world, are great lovers of their homes.

"All this has been carried out under hard living and working conditions. Up to the end of August this year, over 5,500 factories had been damaged by enemy action. The cuts in civilian consumption, and the sacrifices by every single person, were made and put up with as a matter of course. The people who performed these prodigies of labour were fed on monotonous rations and a dull diet, and have had a constant worry about coupons for this and that. The Victorians were proud to be called a nation of shopkeepers, but there have never been such shopkeepers as the British during the war. No shopkeepers ever before have sold out their entire stocks in order to fight.

"We have sacrificed most of our Victorian inheritance. What was the treasure of our grandfathers has gone, and it has been well and gladly sacrificed. When we stood alone against the might of Germany we could not consider Treasury controls. What we wanted was output—and more output. No financial impediments were put in the way of equipping our fighting men. Something like a revolution has happened in Britain during the last five years, and in it the Treasury had played the part of an urbane and painless Robespierre. Taxation has reduced the number of people with incomes above £5,000 a year to a handful. There is hardly any Forsyte now for a novelist to put into a Saga. What Britains have been able to do in these heroic years is a measure of the part they will play in rebuilding the world."

The White Paper which Mr. Brendan Bracken introduced, told in statistics and diagrams a story which will be a source of pride to every Briton who helped to achieve its miracles. The formality with which the record was presented only added to its impressiveness, and one can conceive no more devastating answer to those critics who saw Britain's conduct in many stages of the war as further proofs of our national inefficiency.

In studying these statistics it should be remembered that the reorganization of Britain which the figures show had been carried through in particularly difficult living and working conditions. For five years men and women lived and worked under complete black-out; family life had been broken up, not only by the withdrawal of men and women to the Services, but by evacuation and billeting; production had been made more difficult by the dispersal of factories to frustrate air attacks, and by the need for training new labour to unaccustomed tasks. There had been two long periods when work was carried on under constant and severe air-raids. Since 1940, one and three-quarter million men gave their limited spare time, after long hours of work, for duty in the Home Guard. Most other adult male civilians and many women performed part-time Civil Defence and Fireguard duties out of working hours. The following is a summary of the White Paper:

TWENTY-TWO MILLIONS EMPLOYED

Of the total population of 32 million men and women of working age, 22 millions were employed at the middle of 1944. 10.3 millions were in the Services or whole-time Civil Defence or employed in engineering, shipbuilding, metals and chemicals—

industries mainly concerned in the output of munitions; 5.7 millions were in agriculture, mining, national and local government service, public utilities, transport, shipping (including the Merchant Navy), and the manufacture of food, drink and tobacco—industries which it had been necessary to maintain or expand during the war; 6.0 millions were in building and civil engineering, the textile clothing and other manufacturing industries, the distributive trades, and civilian services.

MOBILIZATION OF MEN

By the middle of 1944, $4\frac{1}{2}$ million men were serving in the Armed Forces of the United Kingdom, compared with less than half a million at the beginning of the war. This total had been reached in spite of the casualties sustained during five years of war. Including the number of killed, missing, taken prisoner, or released on medical and other grounds, the total number of men who have served or are serving in the Armed Forces of the United Kingdom during this war is over $5\frac{1}{2}$ millions. This figure excluded men in the Home Guard, whole-time Civil Defence workers and merchant seamen.

MOBILIZATION OF WOMEN

The high degree of mobilization achieved in this war has been largely due to the contribution made by women. At the middle of 1944, out of 16 million women aged 14—59, 7.1 millions were in the Auxiliary Services, whole-time Civil Defence or industry—an increase of over $2\frac{1}{4}$ millions since the beginning of the war, or, counting each woman working part-time separately, an increase of nearly $2\frac{3}{4}$ millions. The remaining 8.9 millions consist mainly of girls at school and of married women with domestic responsibilities, such as the care of young children or invalids, and house-keeping for men and women engaged directly in the war effort. At the middle of 1944, 900,000 women were doing part-time work in industry, and 350,000 were doing part-time Civil Defence work. Large numbers of married women are members of the Women's Voluntary Services, and many perform 48 hours a month Fire-guard duties, in addition to industrial work.

MUNITIONS

To equip the Fighting Services of the British Commonwealth and Empire and the Allied Forces dependent on us for supplies,

to provide substantial assistance to Russia, and to assist other Allies, a big expansion was necessary in the production of munitions. It is estimated that the monthly output of munitions in the United Kingdom in the first half of 1944 was about six times as great as at the outbreak of war. This increase relates to the overall rate of production of naval and merchant vessels, aircraft, ground munitions and other munitions and warlike stores.

Of the total supply of munitions produced by, or made available to, the British Commonwealth and Empire since the beginning of the war, it is estimated that about seven-tenths has been produced in the United Kingdom, while about one-tenth has come from other Empire countries and from the United States.

CASUALTIES

The total strength of the Armed Forces has been increased each year since 1939, in spite of the casualties suffered in successive campaigns. Casualties suffered by the Armed Forces of the United Kingdom during the first five years of war, as reported up to September 3rd, 1944, were 563,000 (176,000 killed, 38,000 missing, 193,000 wounded, 154,000 prisoners).

Merchant Seamen. From the beginning of the war to August 31st, 1944, 29,629 merchant seamen serving in ships registered in the United Kingdom had been killed by enemy action at sea, and 4,173 had been interned by the enemy. These figures exclude the number of merchant seamen who had been wounded or injured.

Civilians (including those serving in Civil Defence). In addition to the casualties sustained by the Armed Forces and the Merchant Navy, many civilians in the United Kingdom have been killed or injured and detained in hospital, by enemy action. From the beginning of the war to June 12th, 1944, when the flying bomb attacks began, 51,822 people lost their lives and 62,900 were injured and detained in hospital. From June 13th to August 31st, 1944, 5,476 were killed and 15,918 were injured and detained in hospital. The number of civilians killed or injured and detained in hospital in the United Kingdom since the outbreak of the war to August 31st, 1944, was 136,116, of whom 57,298 were killed. Of this total of killed, 7,250 were children, and 23,757 were women.

NAVAL CONSTRUCTION

The effort in naval construction has been fourfold: to increase the offensive fleet in the face of heavy losses, and the need for

faster vessels with armament and other equipment vastly more complicated than that fitted in the early stages of the war; to build the large numbers of escort vessels needed to protect our vital ocean communications; to provide the large numbers of small patrol and other craft necessitated by the enemy invasion of France and the Low Countries and the progress of operations in the Mediterranean; and finally to provide the landing-craft required for combined operations.

AIRCRAFT

At the beginning of the war, total deliveries of new aircraft were at the rate of 730 a month, and over a quarter of these were trainers. By 1943 the average rate of deliveries had trebled and, as measured by structure-weight, had increased nearly six-fold. The fact that structure-weight increased more rapidly than the number of aircraft was the result of the change to larger and more powerful types of aircraft, particularly heavy bombers; 2,889 heavy bombers were delivered in the first six months of 1944, compared with only 41 in the whole of 1940. The output of fighters also showed a striking increase—from 110 a month in 1939 to 940 a month in the first half of 1944.

Engine output increased from 1,130 a month at the end of 1939 to an average of 5,270 a month between January and June, 1944. Over the same period the average horse-power of engines was doubled. Bomb loads increased with the size and power of the bombers produced. In 1939 the average bomb load was 1.2 tons per bomber; in 1943 it was 4.0 tons. The weight of bombs which could be carried a distance of 1,000 miles in one sortie by the monthly output of bombers increased from 210 tons in 1939 to more than 3,000 tons at the beginning of 1944. These figures do not include the bomb-carrying capacity of fighters, which was much developed over the period.

WARTIME RESTRICTIONS

Clothes rationing was introduced in the middle of 1941, and the present ration provides adults with about one-half of the average pre-war consumption. It allows a man who does not receive an industrial supplement, to buy only one pair of boots, shoes or slippers in about thirteen months on the average, and a housewife one pair in eight months. Women's purchases of stockings are limited to five or six pairs a year, instead of fourteen, and

the supply of fully-fashioned stockings is very small. The size of the present clothes ration is barely adequate to cover even the minimum requirements of adults, and has brought about a considerable deterioration in the state of their wardrobes. The reduction imposed on purchases for children has not been so great. In particular, the output of leather footwear for children had been maintained; but they have lost nearly all the pre-war supply of plimsolls and rubber-soled sports shoes.

CURTAILED PRODUCTION

The production of many articles such as motor cars, refrigerators, pianos, vacuum-cleaners, lawn-mowers and aluminium hollow-ware has been completely suspended from 1942 or earlier, while the production of cutlery, wireless sets and valves, bicycles, watches and fountain-pens has been drastically curtailed. Newly-produced furniture may be supplied only against permits to persons setting up house (such as newly-married persons or people who have been bombed-out), and to parents needing a bed for a growing child. The use of jute and cork in the manufacture of floor-covering is prohibited, and the present small output is all of debased quality.

HOUSING

During the war there has been an almost complete ban on the erection of new houses, and facilities for repair and maintenance work to existing houses have been severely curtailed. These factors alone, during the five years of war, would have led to a serious deterioration in living conditions. Conditions have been made much worse by bomb damage, by the necessity for the partial evacuation of certain areas (with consequent crowding in others), and by the requisition of houses for the Services.

Out of about 13 million houses in the United Kingdom at the outbreak of war, 4.5 millions have been damaged by enemy action. Of these, 202,000 have been totally destroyed or damaged beyond repair. A substantial number of those seriously damaged are still uninhabitable, and the great majority have not yet been fully repaired.

INCOME, TAXATION, AND SAVINGS

With a larger number of persons in employment or in the Services, increased hours of work and higher money earnings, the

total income of private persons before taxation rose from £4,779 million to £7,708 million between 1938 and 1943. Most of this increase in income has, however, been saved, or taken by the Government, in the form of income tax and other direct taxes.

The proportion of personal incomes paid in income tax and other direct taxes has increased from one-tenth in 1938 to over one-seventh in 1943. The rise in personal savings has been even more striking. Whereas in 1938 savings out of personal incomes were only about 3½ per cent., almost one-fifth was saved in 1943.

Direct Taxation. Much higher direct taxes have been levied upon personal incomes. The standard rate of income tax which in 1938-39 was 5s. 6d. in the pound, has been progressively raised during the war, and was 10s. in the pound in 1943. The exemption limit was reduced from £120 to £110, the personal allowance for a married man reduced from £170 to £140, and that for a single person from £100 to £80. The effect of these changes and of increased earnings has been to increase the number of income tax payers from 4 millions in 1938-39 to 13 millions in 1943-44, and to increase the income tax payable by them from £336 million to £1,183 million. Before the war less than one million manual wage-earners were liable to income tax, and they paid £3 million; in 1943-44 the number had increased to 7 millions, and they paid £200 million.

The rates of sur-tax on incomes over £2,000 a year have also been increased since 1938-39. A person with an earned income of £10,000 a year now pays more than two-thirds of his income in income tax and sur-tax. For persons with incomes of more than £10,000 the proportion is even higher.

Indirect Taxes. The Government has imposed new and higher rates of tax on many of the articles of consumption which could still be bought during the war. The duty on a pint of beer of average strength in 1938 was 2½d., and at the reduced average strength in 1943, 7½d.; and there have been corresponding increases in the duties on whisky and other spirits. The tax on a packet of 20 cigarettes for which the retail price was 11½d. or 1s. in 1938, was then 5½d.; in 1943 the retail price was 2s. 4d. and the tax 1s. 9d.

Since the war a Purchase Tax has been imposed on most articles of personal or domestic use. In general, garments and footwear for young children and a range of other articles made and sold under the special regulations relating to "Utility" goods

are exempt from this tax. The basic rate of tax is $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. of the wholesale value, but certain articles of a kind which require comparatively frequent replacement are charged at the reduced rate of $16\frac{2}{3}$ per cent.; and various classes of goods of a luxury or non-essential character are taxed at the rate of 100 per cent.

THE COST OF THE WAR

Private savings (the savings of persons and businesses) have increased from £351 million in 1938 to £1,749 million in 1943. By far the greater part of this increase was accounted for by the rise in personal savings, which increased nearly nine-fold between 1938 and 1943. Businesses and public utilities have, in addition, foregone repairs and renewals, and diverted the allowances set aside for these purposes into Government loans.

Although the Government has in this way been able to raise the money needed for the prosecution of the war by taxation and by borrowing, the consequences on the economic structure of the country have been far-reaching.

Depreciation of Capital Resources. Since the savings of private persons and businesses have been lent during the war to the Government, they have not been spent in keeping houses, factories and industrial equipment in repair and up-to-date or in installing new capital equipment, except in so far as this has been necessary for the prosecution of the war.

War Damage. There has been widespread destruction of and damage to buildings, industrial plant, business equipment, public utilities, commodities and private chattels. The immediate repair of some of this damage was necessary, as it affected production, communications, and other services essential for the war effort and for the maintenance of the United Kingdom as an operational base. It was also obviously desirable, in the interests of the war effort, to repair as many houses as could quickly be rendered habitable. The work of repair had to proceed concurrently with the insistent demands of the war on the limited resources of manpower and materials available, and thereby aggravated the problems raised by those demands. By far the greater part of the cost of replacing or repairing the destroyed or damaged assets still remains, however, to be met.

* * * * *

And that is only a brief summary of Britain's part in the first five years of the World War—of the efforts of men and women

who left their homes to join the Army, Navy or Air Force—who became engineers, munition workers, farmers or fire-guards—who spent every ounce of their strength and devoted almost every waking hour to the duties to which they were called.

Mr. Churchill did not exhort the British people in vain to brace themselves to their tasks so that "if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say, 'This was their finest hour.'"

The Press devoted an enormous amount of space to extracts from and summaries of the White Paper, while every leading article was eloquent in its tributes to the nation which had dedicated itself so wholeheartedly to the prosecution of the war.

I quote the following from a leader in the *Evening News*. "If this magnificent record—this unexcelled feat of organization and production—can be achieved in war, need we side with the Jeremiahs who take a dismal view of our prospects in the years of peace? Of course not—provided there is an equal spirit of national unity to key us up and sustain us. That does not mean identity of view or practice or the suspension of any sincere political advocacy. It means the maintenance of a burning faith in the ability and future of our people, whose age-long contributions to human thought and development are unrivalled in the modern world. What Britain has done is an augury of what Britain yet can do."

THE ROAD TO VICTORY

THE Prime Minister had reviewed the progress of the war in a comprehensive survey presented to Parliament on September 28th, 1944. He reminded the country of the debt the Allied cause owed to the First Airborne Division—the men of Arnhem—who, in spite of grievous losses, had enabled the British Second Army to establish a strong bridgehead over the Rhine at Nijmegen. He referred to the speed in which the Allied armies in France had been built up; in the first twenty-four hours a quarter of a million men were ashore, by the twentieth day over a million had landed, equipped with every imaginable contrivance of war and millions of tons of stores.

Churchill then took us to Burma where our Fourteenth Army numbered over a quarter of a million men. But our campaign had been very costly. In the past six months there had been over 237,000 cases of sickness, and 40,000 battle casualties, but war continued to be fought ceaselessly against the "Japs and other diseases of the jungle."

Churchill begged the House not to forget that we owed a great debt to the extraordinary blunders of the Germans—and especially to one man. "When Hitler escaped his bomb, he described his survival as providential. I think, from a purely military point of view, we can all agree with him. It would be most unfortunate if the Allies were to be deprived in the closing phases of the struggle of that form of warlike genius by which Corporal Schickelgruber had so nobly contributed to our victory." Complete agreement had been reached at the Quebec Conference as to the future conduct of the Allied campaigns. A large portion of the British Fleet was already in the Pacific, added to the American naval power; one by one, satellite States had writhed and torn themselves free from Nazi tyranny. There were many Allied problems which had to be settled—especially with France—and it was essential that Stalin should join them in a tripartite conference as soon as the military situation allowed.

Less than two months later, on November 16th, 1944, six Allied armies launched an all-out winter offensive, north of

Aachen. It was preceded by a 3,000-plane blitz. The fighting developed on a front of over 350 miles. Our armies had been waiting for many weeks for this moment; many more weeks of weary fighting was ahead of them.

On Christmas Day the King in a broadcast message said: "We do not know what awaits us when we open the door of 1945. But if we look back to those earlier Christmas Days of the war, we can surely say that the darkness daily grows less and less. The lamps which the Germans put out all over Europe, first in 1914 and then in 1939, are being slowly rekindled. Already we can see some of them beginning to shine through the fog of war that still shrouds so many lands.

"Throughout the Empire, men and women, boys and girls, through hard work and much self-sacrifice have all helped to bring victory nearer. We have shared many dangers, and the common effort has bound us together. We have great allies in this arduous enterprise of the human spirit—man's 'unconquerable mind, and freedom's holy flame.' I believe most surely that we shall reach that goal."

Fighting continued; but on February 13th the world knew that another milestone in history had been reached, for Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin had met at Yalta, in the Crimea, and had concluded their agreement as to the future conduct of the war and as to the terms which would be imposed on Germany. The Agreement contained clauses on Liberated Europe, Poland, Jugoslavia and other problems, but its main decisions were as follows:

"We have agreed on common policies and plans for enforcing the unconditional surrender terms which we shall impose together on Nazi Germany after German armed resistance has been finally crushed. These terms will not be made known until the final defeat of Germany is accomplished."

"It is our inflexible purpose to destroy German militarism and Nazism and to ensure that Germany will never again be able to disturb the peace of the world. We are determined to:

Disarm and disband all German armed forces;

Break up for all time the German General Staff that has repeatedly contrived the resurgence of German militarism;

Remove or destroy all German military equipment;

Eliminate or control all German industry that could be used for military production;

Bring all war criminals to justice and swift punishment, and exact reparations in kind for the destruction wrought by Germans;

Wipe out the Nazi party, Nazi laws, organizations and institutions;

Remove all Nazi and militarist influences from the cultural and economic life of the German people; and

Take in harmony such other measures in Germany as may be necessary to future peace and safety of the world."

The campaigns in Europe and in the Far East increased in ferocity. On February 22nd, a further Allied offensive was preceded by an air bombardment by over 6,000 planes—the maximum strength of British and American Bomber and Fighter Commands—the targets ranging from the Danish frontier to Italy. It was the greatest co-ordinated air offensive in history, its chief aim being to paralyse enemy transport and communications over a huge area of Europe.

* * * * *

My fireside presented many cheerful pictures during the evenings of March, 1945. Optimism infected everybody, from the Prime Minister downwards. He was watching the final stages of the war with the zest of a schoolboy. He would fly over to Montgomery's headquarters to spend a week-end with our armies and tour the ruins of German towns, and there were chuckles around millions of British firesides as they read his breezy messages to the troops. My friend Tom Gibson often joined our family circle with his wife, to wait for the nine o'clock News. When that news promised to be unusually cheerful, he would arrive smoking a large Churchillian cigar to mark the importance of the occasion. March must have been an expensive month for him.

By March 7th, Cologne had fallen. General Patton's Third Army had broken another of its fantastic records by an advance to the Rhine. Churchill had spent the previous week-end on German soil, grinning at the now useless Siegfried Line, and at abandoned German pillboxes. Happy as a sandboy, he chalked on a shell "Hitler—Personally," and fired the gun which sent it on its journey; and after his three-day tour of the Western Front he stated, "Soon we shall be across the Rhine. Anyone can see that one good heave all together will end the War in Europe." Cologne had fallen in two days, and disclosed itself as a tragic example of what 40,000 tons of bombs can do to a great city. By

March 8th, Patton's men, in a non-stop advance of a mile an hour for fifty-eight hours, had reached the Rhine; the American First Army under Hodges was closing up to the river.

For the next fortnight the Allies, working in perfect unison, were massing on the west bank of the river in preparation for a leap across. Fighting was continuous, Allied attacks from the air were non-stop. By March 19th, Coblenz was in our hands; we had taken over 100,000 prisoners since the beginning of the month, and the enemy were in full retreat in the Saar-Moselle-Rhine triangle. Three days later, Patton controlled the west bank of the Rhine from Coblenz to Ludwigshaven, and had wiped out nine enemy divisions; their casualties being estimated at over 100,000.

Meanwhile, we were waiting for Montgomery to strike; the biggest smoke-screen of the war blanketed his section of the front and blotted out the preparations which he was making for his Rhine crossing. Patton had apparently become irresistible; he had trapped nearly 80,000 men of the German First and Seventh Armies; the enemy's attempts to escape became a rout; they were ceaselessly hammered from the air, and vast masses of destruction encumbered their roads as the American Seventh Army captured the towns which had been the last strongholds of the Siegfried Line.

Worms, Mainz and Kaiserslautern were captured in Patton's non-stop advance. The Germans' escape roads were scenes of indescribable chaos—of burning vehicles and vast masses of destruction. Escape was obviously the one thought in the minds of the routed armies—miles of congested roads and crawling columns ceaselessly attacked from the air—while Montgomery's armies at the lower end of the Rhine were building up for their assault. The all-out air blitz on the fleeing Germans had converted the roads into a sea of fire; 5,000 vehicles were smashed up in a single day, for the congested escape routes were sitting targets. The Seventh German Army was soon annihilated, and big German cities fell like ninepins to the U.S. Third and Seventh Armies, which had by now joined forces.

Monty's smoke-screen still dominated the newspaper headlines, while Patton was increasing his grip on 100 miles of the Rhine from Coblenz to Ludwigshaven. Monty's fog blanketed the Rhine for sixty-six miles as the Allied air fleets struck again at the Ruhr road to Berlin; but a "security silence" hid from us the key to

Monty's secrets, and from the enemy any hint of the trouble which was brewing for them. Very shortly afterwards they were called upon to endure, in one day, the biggest air assault of all time; for on March 22nd, Allied planes flew 7,300 sorties, attacking communications, airfields and other objectives deep into the Reich, stoking the fires beyond the Rhine and adding to the wreckage of the Ruhr.

It was the perfect air weather of which our pilots had so often dreamed, but the smoke of devastated towns and villages hung like a pall over vast areas of the North German Plain. The climax was yet to come, when the greatest air armada since D-Day went out to pave the way for Monty's long-awaited offensive, which was also assisted by a terrible artillery barrage. For many days the three great armies under Montgomery had been moving into position behind the smoke-screen. Patton's army had already crossed the Rhine and established a solid bridgehead—the second since that at Remagen. The incredible Patton had sprung a surprise and got across without a shot being fired or a man lost. And then, at long last, came Monty's turn.

On March 24th, the Prime Minister joined him at his Twenty-first Army Group headquarters and the battle began. Monty—taking his troops into his confidence, as usual—reviewed the situation since February 7th, when he had told them that they were going into the line for the last and final round. "The Twenty-first Army Group," he stated, "will now cross the Rhine. The enemy possibly thinks he is safe behind this great river obstacle. We all agree that it is a great obstacle; but we will show the enemy that he is far from safe behind it. This great Allied fighting machine, composed of integrated land and air forces, will deal with the problem in no uncertain manner. And, having crossed the Rhine, we will crack about in the plains of Northern Germany, chasing the enemy from pillar to post. The swifter and the more energetic our action, the sooner the war will be over, and that is what we all desire; to get on with the job and finish off the German war as soon as possible. Over the Rhine, then, let us go. And good hunting to you all on the other side."

They went; and got across the river on a 17-mile front, an airborne army of 40,000 men having been dropped from the sky ahead of them. Within a couple of days, a bridgehead of over 200 square miles had been established across the Rhine—and the Prime Minister had joined the troops very shortly afterwards.



(Associated Press)

"THE MASTER RACE."

German prisoners captured during the storming of Limburg.

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Monty's crossing had been accomplished by an armada of special landing-craft which had been towed 200 miles from the nearest ocean, craft which carried in weight from 9 to 26 tons, and some of which were 77 feet long. While Patton's "Wild-cat" armoured division had captured Darmstadt and were running wild into the heart of Germany, and Hodges' First Army, breaking out of their Remagen bridgehead had fanned out almost without interruption, Monty was swiftly building up for his dash across the North German plain.

By March 27th, the Rhine had ceased to be an obstacle, and war correspondents revelled in the luxury of being able to send across tremendous news. Their brothers in Fleet Street responded wholeheartedly. Throwing aside any attempt to preserve professional reticence or calm objective statement, they clamoured for their biggest type and flew their banners across front pages with obvious delight.

I reproduce (unfortunately in miniature) a selection of the headings which made our fireside so cheerful during those evenings when Tom Gibson's cigar jutted from his smiling face at such a truculent angle. It required no effort of imagination to visualize another cigar, in Downing Street, which also jutted from the smiling face of the man who was seeing all his brave dreams come true; he had heard the good news before it reached us, but he could enjoy with special zest—as an old war correspondent—the work of the younger men at the front who were privileged to describe some of the most thrilling moments of history.

The newspapers were almost ablaze with excitement. "This is the news that has been almost six years in coming"—"Half the German army is destroyed"—"Prisoner-of-war cages crammed full"—"The end is in sight"—"Enemy breaking everywhere"—"Anything may happen"—"All resistance collapsing"—"Nothing to stop us."

Churchill simply couldn't be out of it. He flew out to the Front again to cross the Rhine and see his plans come true. The cool and courteous Eisenhower made no attempt at reticence. He also crossed the Rhine and stated, "I expect the American First Army to lick everything they come up against." Day by day the news grew into a crescendo of triumph. Eisenhower stated at a Press conference that "the Germans on the Western Front are a whipped army," but tempered his statement by asking correspondents not to report him as exulting or being over-optimistic; the time for

waving flags or ringing bells had not yet arrived. "I know their main defence line is broken, but that does not mean that all our difficulties are over."

The newspapers refused to be downhearted, for the news insisted on being good. A temporary news black-out was imposed when four Allied armies had apparently started on a neck-and-neck race for Berlin; but we all expected that when the ban was lifted, the official bulletin would be worth waiting for. Glancing again through the news headlines of those exciting March days, I realize that there was one outstanding figure who frequently stole the limelight from Churchill and Montgomery. I refer, of course, to Lieut.-General Patton, Commander of the U.S. Third Army, the swashbuckling soldier who was known to all his men as "Two-Gun," or "Blood and Guts."

Patton had been given a bad mark earlier in the war by striking one of his soldiers, and had been severely reprimanded; but when fighting started in earnest, he soon outdistanced all the other Allied commanders by the speed of his advances. He had led a wild-cat scamper across France from Normandy, and had broken the siege of Bastogne during Runstedt's Ardennes offensive. His subsequent achievements became more and more like a Wild-West film of "bad men" shooting up townships and leaving a trail of destruction in their path. The news headings could hardly keep pace with him: "Patton is off again," "Another spectacular advance," "Patton's men burst through bridgehead," "Patton's rogue columns at large"; and then would come a little story of "Blood and Guts" reaching a 150 foot wide river, and swimming across it under heavy fire, as an example to his men.

Soon we were to hear of 30-mile advances in a day, of his tanks careering at will across Germany, of the capture of hundreds of enemy tanks and thousands of vehicles. He then proceeded to capture cities, and to create utter confusion in the enemy ranks. "Patton's tanks run wild," "Hurricane offensive," "German Seventh Army annihilated," "Southern Rhineland split," "Patton has 100-mile grip." His Third Army was the first to cross the Rhine—without firing a shot, and giving the enemy no time to regroup his shattered forces, plunged forward 40 miles. We obtained a bewildered impression that Patton was fighting a private war of his own, until at last he paused on March 30th, to give a brief account of himself and his men.

In an Order to his troops he disclosed that since they crossed

the Moselle on March 16th, a fortnight previously, they had seized 6,484 square miles of enemy territory, captured 3,072 cities and towns, taken 140,112 prisoners and killed or wounded 99,000 other Germans, and eliminated practically the entire German First and Seventh Armies. "History records no greater achievement in such a limited time," says the Order.

But even Patton's achievements were only a part of a vast offensive. Big things were about to be achieved by Montgomery again. The German armies were described by war correspondents as a rabble retreat, around which the Allies were tearing like wolves through panicked flocks of sheep. While the enemy flight was becoming increasingly chaotic, Monty was imposing his "Silence!" order. British armoured columns had long since left the Rhine behind, and were making for the great autobahn which led to Berlin. American airplanes were having a succession of field-days strafing fleeing enemy columns, and the "Desert Rats," at the spearhead of the Second Army, were waiting to complete the journey which they had begun so long ago.

The Press displayed their excitement in bigger and still bigger headlines, in spite of the censorship on all place-names. "Annihilation now at hand" was the *News Chronicle* heading on the last day of March. "Across the Reich flows our quicksilver"—"Now for large-scale mopping up"—"Flood of Allied armies loose in Germany," were typical headings to their correspondents' dispatches. We read in other newspapers that the enemy were too beaten to run, and that our armies were dominated by such a wild sense of urgency that they did not pause even to find out the names of the places they were capturing; 2,000 tanks were the spearhead of the Big Push—the Ruhr was encircled—great air attacks on the submarine yards at Kiel and Hamburg were being made by Flying Fortresses and Liberators—thirteen truckloads of unused V2's were captured intact—the pace was becoming delirious. It was, in the words of Alexander Clifford of the *Daily Mail*, "History at a gallop."

And then, in the middle of these triumphs, came horrifying news—the sudden death of Franklin Roosevelt—the noble man who had played so great a part in our victories, the invalid who had fought with such unflinching heroism for the Four Freedoms—the champion of all the great causes for which the United Nations had taken up arms. It was the most irreparable loss the Allies had sustained during the whole war, and for some days the progress

of the battles seemed to be almost unimportant. We were stunned by the loss of a great man who had become Britain's truest friend, and whose passing deprived Freedom of its most gallant crusader.

But the war which he had done so much to plan, and the causes to which he devoted his life, were moving rapidly towards their fulfilment. Not only in Germany, but on the Italian front, signs of the complete destruction of the German armies were obvious. Before the end of April, Alexander's Fifth Army had captured Genoa, the Russians were fighting in the greater part of Berlin and had linked up with the Americans on the Elbe. The joining of hands of the Russians who had fought on from the ruins of Stalingrad and Sebastopol and had smashed forward for 1,400 miles, with the Americans who had travelled even further, was a great moment in the war's history; but our thoughts were clouded by the horrors which had been exposed during the Allied advance by the capture of the Nazi concentration camps at Buchenwald and Belsen.

So that official confirmation could be obtained of the ghastly stories which had been told, a deputation of eight members of Parliament and two Peers were invited to visit the camps and report. Their visit only confirmed the details which had already been recorded—that the German treatment of their prisoners had marked "the lowest point of degradation to which humanity had yet descended."

The total number of those who had died or been killed, in Buchenwald alone, was over 51,000. The systematic, sadistic cruelty which had been practised, and the condition of the human skeletons who still remained in the camp, left no doubt that the punishment or extermination of those responsible was a solemn duty.

While we read of these horrors we were becoming increasingly aware that the hour of retribution was fast approaching; but *not* quite as fast as was suggested by the flood of rumour and speculation in the Press. On April 29th, 1945, the *Sunday Express* carried a banner headline, "Germany Surrenders!" qualifying its giant type by the sub-heading "No confirmation yet from Eisenhower." Reuter had reported that Unconditional Surrender had been offered by Himmler to the United States and Britain. A cautiously-worded statement from Downing Street told us that the British Government had received no information to this effect. But it was

obvious that Germany was in a state of disintegration. Stockholm was the ringleader in circulating rumours which were printed under bold headlines in most of the British newspapers. According to these stories, Count Bernadotte had twice met Himmler, who had told him that Goering was gibbering, Hitler raving and dying, and Germany one great madhouse—in which Himmler was the only sane person left.

Further stories were flooding neutral capitals, of Goering appearing in a Roman toga, of Ribbentrop being arrested, and Goebbels having committed suicide. Meanwhile, it was possible, by irrefutable evidence, to disentangle truth from this welter of rumour. Another concentration camp had been freed—Dachau—with 32,000 prisoners; Mussolini and his mistress were hanging from an improvised gibbet—the roof of a garage in a Milan square—and his people were spitting on his mangled corpse; swarms of our bombers were flying to Holland to drop food and supplies to the starving Dutch; and from Hamburg radio, the only transmitter left to the Germans, was coming admissions that the end was very near.

On May 2nd, the *News Chronicle* headline in tremendous type announced "Hitler Dead." The news had been given out by Admiral Doenitz, who was announced as the new Fuehrer, and who called on the Germans to continue the fight. We read in another column a statement by Count Bernadotte that he had never forwarded a message from Himmler to the Allies—a further statement that Hitler had been killed by the Russians in a Berlin battle—and a third that the Russians could not find his body. The rumours multiplied, and were so frequently printed as authentic news that readers, at first bewildered, soon began to distrust everything they read, except official statements. But it was evident that the German army was a broken rabble caught between the advancing Russians and British.

On May 3rd came the official news that the German armies in Italy had signed an unconditional surrender, and that Berlin had fallen.

It was beginning to be possible to separate fact from fiction. We believed that splendid soldier, Field-Marshal Alexander when he announced the surrender of 1,000,000 men, and rejoiced that his hard-won victories across North Africa, Tunisia, Sicily, Cassino, Anzio, the Gothic Line and the Po Valley had at last brought him his reward; we believed the statement that Mont-

gomery had linked up with the Russians—that Hamburg had fallen without a fight; and that the swarming roads of Germany with their panic-stricken traffic were providing the Allied air forces with the finest targets of the war.

On May 4th came the news for which we had all been waiting. The German army had capitulated to Montgomery. Two German admirals, a general and other officers had signed the instrument of unconditional surrender in Monty's tent on Luneberg Heath. Doenitz, Germany's new Fuehrer, had already disappeared, Himmler remained a mystery, and it was General-Admiral von Friedberg—supreme commander of the German navy—who arrived at Montgomery's tent, with other Hun officers to negotiate surrender. Even at the last they attempted to obtain conditions. Monty dealt with these very curtly, and before sending Friedberg and his companions away to make up their minds, showed them his operational map, which disclosed the German armies' hopeless position, and assured them that if they did not agree to every one of his terms he would "go on with the war, and be delighted to do so."

The Germans returned later with their complete acceptance of the surrender terms, and Britain was overjoyed to see in its newspapers of May 5th pictures of Monty in his tent quietly accepting the capitulation of all German armed forces in North-West Germany, Holland and Denmark, including the garrisons on Heligoland and the Frisian Islands—over 1,000,000 men; the prize for which he had been waiting ever since El Alamein.

I could visualize the quiet satisfaction with which he read the terms: "The German command to carry out at once, and without argument or comment, all further orders that will be issued by the Allied Powers on any subject." For I had met him at Twenty-first Army Group Headquarters in London before D-Day, and I had received four letters from him after our meeting. Behind his appearance as a lean, hard-bitten soldier, I had found serenity, kindliness and a sense of humour; he is completely natural and free from self-importance, is devoted to his men, and has an innate courtesy which prompted him, during the busiest early days of the invasion of Europe to reply personally to letters I had written to him. He was, I knew, as glad for his men as for himself that the team-spirit and their shared sacrifices had ended so triumphantly; nor, as he is a truly Christian soldier, did he fail to give his humble thanks to the God of battles whom he worships.

All his confident prophecies had been fulfilled. Before the



"INTELLIGENT ANTICIPATION."

Some London newspapers during the period 2nd-9th May, 1945.

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Invasion he had told his troops, "I want you men to know that I never put an army into battle until I am quite certain it is going to be a good show. Never. We will not have any question of failure. If there is any question, we will not start. . . . You and I will see this thing through together."

Before Alamein, his message to his soldiers had been, "The Lord mighty in battle will give us victory." Before D-Day, in a speech at the Mansion House, he had referred to the Army as "the instrument of a new-born national vigour. The special glory of our endeavour must be a surge of the whole people's finest qualities, worthy to be the prayer, 'Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered.'"

Two months after D-Day, when his men had been engaged in very hard fighting, he thanked them and reviewed their successes; and again he asked them to remember to give honour and praise where it is due. He recalled that, at the Battle of Bosworth Field, the Earl of Richmond uttered these words as part of his prayer: "O Thou, whose captain I account myself, look on my forces with a gracious eye. Make us Thy ministers of chastisement, that we may praise Thee in Thy victory."

Within four days of Monty's triumph, the Allied victories were complete; the final capitulation had been made to the combined Allied armies in Berlin, and the capture of Rangoon had crowned the heroic efforts of our armies in Burma.

Three more German armies had surrendered to the Americans and French, there were rumours that the enemy forces in Norway were about to capitulate; but the Russians were still fighting. On May 7th—two days after Monty's victory—Admiral Doenitz declared the unconditional surrender of all Germany's fighting troops, and later it was announced officially that the surrender had taken place at General Eisenhower's headquarters at Rheims.

But we still waited; we had become so dazed with rumours and contradictions in the last stages of the campaign and so deeply suspicious that Germany would cheat us in the end, that we wanted the promised statement from Churchill, and the announcement of VE-Day, before we could devote ourselves to thanksgiving and rejoicing.

We did not receive the official news until May 8th at three o'clock; but a large section of the public could not wait. They were confident that the war was over, and, on the night of May 7th, their jubilation began—a mere foretaste of what was to follow.

VICTORY DAY

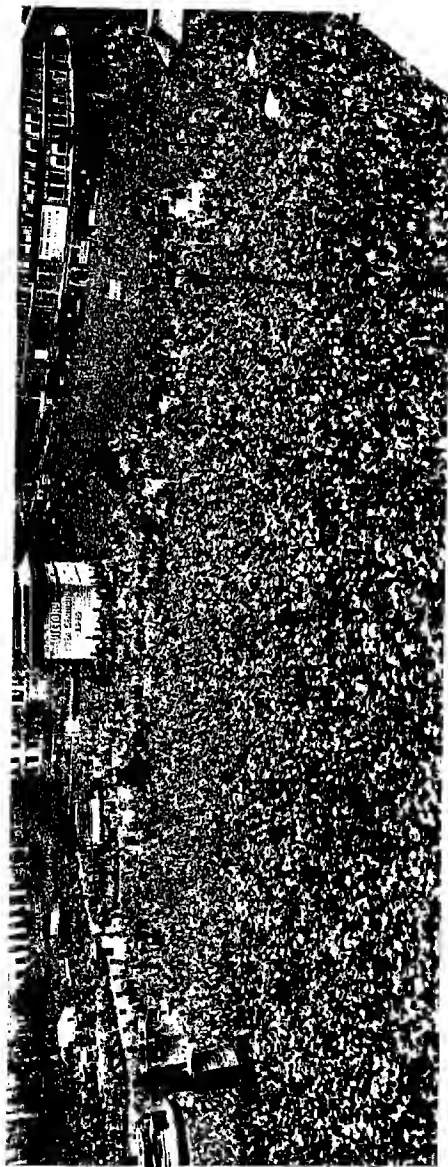
AT three o'clock in the afternoon of May 8th, 1945, Winston Churchill broadcast the official news that, on the morning of the 7th, at 2.41 a.m., General Jodl, on behalf of the High Command and of the German State, had signed the act of Unconditional Surrender to the Allied Expeditionary Force and the Soviet High Command.

"To-day," stated the Prime Minister, "this agreement will be ratified and confirmed at Berlin, where Air Chief Marshal Tedder, Deputy Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force, and General de Lattre de Tassigny representing the French Republic, will sign on behalf of General Eisenhower; Marshal Zhukov will sign on behalf of the Russian High Command. The German representatives will be Field Marshal Keitel, Chief of the High Command, and the Commanders-in-Chief of the German Navy, Army and Air Force. Hostilities will end officially at one minute after midnight to-night, Tuesday, May 8th."

That statement, to which was added a brief retrospect of the war, was repeated to a rapturous House of Commons, who subsequently proceeded to the Church of St. Margaret's, Westminster, to give humble thanks to Almighty God for our deliverance—as their predecessors had done at the end of the last war. A similar statement had been read to the House of Lords by Lord Woolton, after which the Lords rose and proceeded to a Thanksgiving Service at Westminster Abbey.

Meanwhile, London had long since commenced its VE-Day celebrations. Tens of thousands had set forth from their homes, early in the morning, making their way to Buckingham Palace, Trafalgar Square, Piccadilly Circus, Whitehall, Westminster and other time-honoured centres of public rejoicing. They paraded through the roads and streets, filled the squares, danced, waved flags, climbed on cars, buses and lorries; but especially did they throng around Buckingham Palace, where they shouted for the King.

Soon after three o'clock, the Royal Family appeared on the



(Daily Mail Photograph)

RENDEZVOUS WITH VICTORY.
Trafalgar Square, 8th May, 1945.

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balcony; six times throughout the day they reappeared to rejoice with their subjects. On their third appearance they were joined by Mr. Churchill, who shared the frenzied applause of the crowd, for five minutes on end. By the evening the throng had grown to over 100,000 waiting to hear the King's message broadcast through loudspeakers. It had been a very busy day for the Royal Family, and for the Prime Minister. Twice he had appeared on the balcony of the Ministry of Health, and was compelled to make speeches. "This is *your* victory," he told his delirious audience. "Victory of the cause of freedom in every land. In all our long history we have never seen a greater day than this. God bless you all."

St. Paul's, floodlit, glowed in splendour as darkness fell. Elsewhere the capital became a playground. Around the floodlit Nelson's Column, another 100,000 people gave vent to their joy, thousands more swarmed through the illuminated Admiralty Arch to swell the crowds which swept along the Mall to Buckingham Palace, where, just after ten o'clock, floodlights suddenly bathed the King's home in brilliance and focussed all eyes on the Royal Standard. Everywhere the countless thousands surged happily—singing, cheering bonfires, fireworks and each other, expressing emotions which had for so long been controlled.

Every town and suburb, every hamlet in the Kingdom celebrated; every little home displayed its flags, banners and V-signs, or gave thanks in its churches; many, alas, spent the day bravely enduring their grief. Every mood of Victory Day was reflected in the King's speech, which was broadcast to the Empire: "Let us remember those who will not come back, their constancy and courage in battle, their sacrifice and endurance in the face of a merciless enemy. . . . We have come to the end of our tribulation; and they are not with us at the moment of rejoicing. Then let us salute with proud gratitude the great host of the living who have brought us to Victory. Armed or unarmed, men and women, you have fought, striven and endured to the utmost, and as your King I thank, with a full heart, those who bore arms so valiantly on land or sea or in the air, and all civilians who, shouldering their burdens, have carried them unflinchingly without complaint."

None of us, whether rejoicing in the streets or in our own homes could have realized how greatly the hearts of the Empire and of our Allies were uplifted by Victory, if the B.B.C. had not thrown its magic girdle around the earth, so that the English-speaking

aces and their comrades-in-arms could give thanks together. Never, surely, was an unforgettable occasion in the world's history recorded with more dignity, breadth, and vision, or charged with deeper emotion, than this Victory Night Broadcast, "Britain Salutes Their King," which united us in loyalty and thanksgiving with the countless millions whose anxieties we had shared.

First we heard the voice of Canada; then of Australia, recording the battles in which they fought and which some of them had still to fight in the Far East; New Zealand spoke of her deep loyalty, reading from a long scroll of victory which they offered to their King; South Africa unfolded her modest but proud record of land, sea and air engagements; a message came from a native Indian soldier, telling of his comrades' pride in the many V.C.'s won by Indians in the war. From the whole Colonial Empire, men ranged over the ether to stand by their comrades in the Homeland—men from Ceylon and Fiji, West Indians and Basutos who had fought from Egypt to the Alps, men from the Colonies and Protectorates who had come to prove again their loyalty to their King.

A salute came from the Royal Fleet, a manly voice speaking: "Officers and men of all Britain's navies have the honour to report that our wars in the Western Hemisphere are accomplished." Then the voice of the Army, who had fought over deserts, mountains and beaches, and stormed fortresses: "We will not forget our comrades," came the stirring words. "Before they died they proved themselves worthy. The Army salute their King!" The Royal Air Force spoke, the King's youngest Service, the men who had won the Battle of Britain and fought over long skyways; pilots, observers, ground crews, saluting the Marshal of the R.A.F., their Commander-in-Chief. The voice of the Merchant Navy—men who sailed in the winter convoys to Russia—a message of pride from the men of the Red Duster, spoken by a seaman who had lost both his legs, his manly salute being followed by the hymn for those in peril on the sea, "Eternal Father, strong to save."

The voice of the Home Guard was heard—men of the ordinary people who had kept alert and ready through the war, who had now laid down their weapons and saluted their King from the offices and fields and farms to which they had returned. A Nurse's salute followed—a story of heroism told with quiet pride; the

Civil Defence spoke, proud to have won the right to stand beside the armed forces. A Policeman talked about the battles on the Home Front. Then came a moving, loyal tribute from a London mother, representing the millions of housewives who carried on at home, and worked with the hospital services during raids, one of the many whose homes were ruined and who would build again, proud of the King as the father of a family who have shared the common danger.

A pause for War Report—B.B.C. men describing London's joy while it was being manifested; scenes outside Buckingham Palace, the King, Queen and Royal Family appearing on a balcony and saluting the frenzied crowd; the appearance of Churchill and his War Cabinet on the balcony of the Ministry of Health building. Churchill saying, "God bless you all," and giving the V-sign. Then, the voice of Eisenhower, quiet, very friendly, American; of Tedder, telling us how members of the Air Force forged a unity that will live in history, of their teamwork which avoided the dreadful holocausts of the last war; of Admiral Sir John Tovey congratulating the Allied Navies who fought unceasingly, and carried the men and supplies which won us victory; of "Monty," asking us to remember those who fell, and those who triumphed. " 'This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.' Let us never forget what we owe to our great Allies. We have won the war; now let us win the peace."

Soon, our troops in Germany were speaking to us; a regular soldier whose war was not yet over; another man who would have to face the Japanese war before returning to his work on Clydebank; a parachutist (a former bricklayer) who wanted to return home and carry on with his job; a ploughman who longed to get back to the land. A Canadian Wing-Commander, who had spent five years in the sky, was followed by General Bradley, United States Commander of a group of armies, who had 'phoned the great news of the surrender, from his bedside to his officers and men; American soldiers of Twelfth Army Group, and airmen greeted us, and a tank man, one of the first to cross the bridge at Remagen. Italy called to us—a Victory Message from Field Marshal Alexander.

Back to London. Piccadilly, so packed that you couldn't drop a sixpence into the crowd, bonfires, fireworks, screaming, singing, unalloyed joy in the hub of Empire; Lambeth—the crowd singing the "Lambeth Walk," the scene described by Tommy Trinder—

proud of being a cockney, delighted with the yelling crowds celebrating the great night when London was "bomb-happy."

The Channel Islands spoke—a woman, thankful for her deliverance; from Dover—Hellfire Corner, Bomb Alley—a Warden told of the 2,226 shells which fell; the voice of Birmingham was represented by a soldier from Jamaica; we were taken to a little house at Hull, into which friends had dropped to celebrate; to Castle Square, Caernarvon, where a great crowd were singing as only a Welsh crowd can; to Belfast, where a British officer who had for five years fought the U-boats from bases at Derry and Belfast, paid a tribute to the men of the yards who had built our finest ships and followed their voyages. A few seconds afterwards we were in Edinburgh: Princes Street, fireworks, the crowd dancing reels; Glasgow called us—Mrs. Macdonald, speaking on behalf of the mothers who had suffered—telling the story of her boys, one of whom was killed in Italy, another who had lost a leg, two more of whom were still in the Forces. Greenock greeted us, her ships' sirens sending a strident chorus across the Western Gate, from which many convoys had sailed. To-night many of their crews were ashore, with their girls, celebrating victory.

In a flash we were taken across the Atlantic. New York; the crowds in Times Square, a blizzard of ticker-tape descending from the windows of the skyscrapers on to the heads of the jammed, delirious revellers; to Cincinatti, 700 miles west of New York—pandemonium—an effigy of Hitler hanging from an electric light standard; to San Francisco—feeling let down after a week of false rumours, and celebrating very quietly. Then we returned to Europe again. Paris. The day had started with a procession of students from the Latin Quarter, carrying flowers to the tomb of the Unknown Warrior; it had developed into a delirium of celebration in the main boulevards. The deep boom of the bells of Notre Dame, the crowds dancing to accordions around the Bal Musettes of the Place de la Bastille.

The B.B.C. then sent a V-Day signal to the Far East. "Good luck! May *your* V-day be soon." A reply came from Lord Louis Mountbatten, still fighting to smash the last enemy. We returned to Buckingham Palace, the ever-increasing, swirling, eddying crowd still clamouring for their King and Queen. Crackers, flares, music, a searchlight focussing the purple-draped balcony on which Their Majesties were again to appear. Lastly, away from

the crowd, to a little village inn in Dorset, where a simple countryman introduced us to thatchers, poachers, roadmen, villagers, lifting their tankards to Peace.

* * * * *

The two VE days merged into one; the first day's celebrations continued in London throughout the night, and many thousands of revellers, having slept in the Parks or any other available spaces, awoke to resume their rejoicings. It was an occasion which would never occur again, and they were determined to make the most of it. Those of us who were celebrating more quietly in our own homes, not only avoided teeming crowds, chaotic traffic, besieged restaurants, and exhaustion, but were able to obtain a far more complete picture of celebrations than could possibly be seen in thronged London streets and squares.

The B.B.C. resumed its Victory Report on the night of "VE1" by taking us first to the East End of London, to which the King and Queen had driven to meet their people in Bethnal Green and Ilford, where all the world and his wife roared their welcome, singing the National Anthem—led by a band of the Salvation Army. A moment afterwards we were in Moscow, where we heard Stalin telling his people of the act of capitulation and reminding them of their sacrifices; Russia rejoicing as 1,000 guns roared their triumphant message. Next, on a magic carpet to Holland; the bells of Utrecht pealing for the first time since war began; Amsterdam singing their favourite national song, forbidden during the German occupation; the voice of one of the resistance leaders speaking from Hilversum. To Denmark, where a Copenhagen radio-announcer thanked the Allies; and on to Norway, to hear the first broadcast for five years from a British correspondent.

Next, we heard Victory messages from Mackenzie King in Canada, and from Smuts of South Africa, who spoke from San Francisco, filled with deep gratitude for the crowning mercy of deliverance and asking us to remember the unknown warriors who had made the supreme sacrifice; South Africa was also represented by a Zulu chieftain delivering an oration composed for the occasion and greeted with the cheers of his warriors. Back to London for sound pictures of the visits of the Prime Minister to Allied Ambassadors, the Prime Minister sitting on the back of an open police car. We followed him to the American Embassy, where he was greeted by Mr. Winant, and his son recently released

from a German prison camp; to the Soviet Embassy—and finally to the French Embassy, before returning with him to Downing Street.

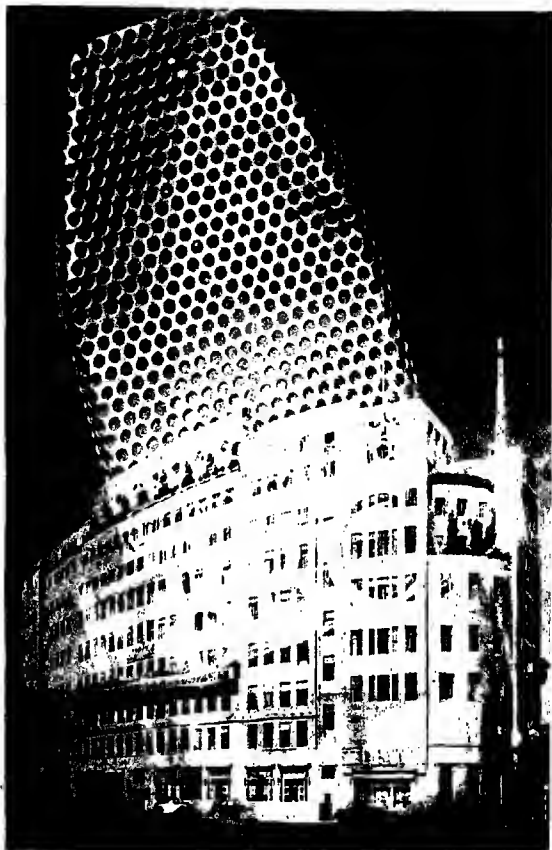
As a fitting end to their Victory Report, the B.B.C. presented a brilliant review of the life of Winston Churchill, "The History of a Reputation." The history started with impressions of Winston's boyhood, of the lad's uncanny ability to get what he wanted, although he had been a backward scholar at Harrow. One saw him scraping through the entrance exam. at Sandhurst, his early years as a subaltern in the 18th Lancers—his search for adventure, early campaigns which took him to South Africa, his years of apprenticeship in politics, his progress through various offices in the Cabinet, his long period "in the wilderness"—and his emergence as our greatest Englishman, whose leadership had brought us through years of deadly peril to deliverance.

* * * * *

I have never joined the ranks of those critics who seem to snatch, with special pleasure, opportunities of attacking the B.B.C. for imperfections in its programmes. On the contrary, I am amazed that this devoted branch of public service receives such little appreciation, that listeners so soon forget the privileges which Radio brings to them.

Every aspect of our war years has been recorded by radio with incredible vividness and reality; the King has talked to us in our homes; we have sat by our firesides and heard Churchill, Roosevelt, Montgomery and all the other war leaders; we have listened to men of our Merchant Navy, of our shipyards, mines and factories—we have almost seen them at work, by means of "live" broadcasts of up-to-the-minute topicality. And we have seldom realized that, while the Home Service or Forces programmes reached our homes—or by turning a knob we could roam through a variety of foreign stations—the B.B.C. was also broadcasting, day and night, all over the world, to *two hundred million listeners*.

We have heard History being made. The Atlantic Charter meeting, Churchill's address to the United States Senate—every other great event has been recorded for us and relayed to all corners of the world. Hope was given to the occupied countries and to heroic "underground" movements by constant news from the B.B.C., our Allies were given true pictures of every aspect of wartime life in Britain; and we have been provided, in our own



(B.B.C. Photograph)

"THIS IS LONDON."

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Home programme, with continual radio service from 7 a.m. until midnight, and by the Forces programme from 6.30 a.m. until 11 p.m.—every twenty-four hours.

And yet, not only have the blessings of the Radio been accepted as a matter of course, but frequently one hears the most vigorous criticism of certain items in the programmes which do not appeal to the individual listener. I feel that most listeners' criticisms of Radio programmes are based on a lack of realization of the vastness of the B.B.C.'s problems. The Home and the General Forces programmes alone involved the provision of musical, educational, news, entertainment and other feature programmes to fill each *minute* of a seventeen-hour day; but an ever-present factor of the B.B.C.'s responsibilities is that intangible and insoluble mystery, the Public Taste.

Among the tens of millions who comprise their English-speaking audiences, are men and women who are bored with classic music, but who adore jazz; who cannot listen to serious talks on World affairs, and who only switch on for light entertainment; and the younger generation who prefer crooners to "straight" singers. Through these varied cross-sections of their public the programme-planners endeavour to chart a course; and it must not be forgotten that the B.B.C. is a Government department working under a rigid constitution which does not give the directors of its various sections the freedom and independence which the controller of a newspaper, or the manager of a theatre, could exercise.

Musical items, to satisfy the infinitely varied tastes of listeners, must range from the classic to the ultra-modern, from symphony concerts to the latest developments in Jazz or Swing. Other features comprise direct instructions to schools, talks on a variety of subjects by recognized experts, the organization of such popular forums as the Brains Trust and other discussion groups—and the collection and distribution of News. In the realm of entertainment it is inevitable that the whole field of talent should be explored; but is it realized that it is not always possible to secure the ideal artist for a programme, that the B.B.C. has to face the competition of every other section of the world of entertainment—and that Radio is a medium in which few artists succeed. Most artists sorely miss the personal reaction of audiences which provide them with their chief inspiration. It is impossible to cater for the taste of every listener, but surely if every item of entertainment were excluded from B.B.C. programmes, and we received only the

News Bulletins, with those incomparable War Reports which were added since D-Day, we should be getting an amazing return for the cost of a Wireless Licence?

The B.B.C. realized that the war would provide immeasurable opportunities for more vivid presentation of the news of the hour, and it immediately commenced to relay personal stories by eye-witnesses and by the corps of correspondents it had organized—broadcasts from aeroplanes by pilots and observers, the voices of our soldiers and sailors, the sounds of battle.

During the London air-raids, part of the main B.B.C. premises was wrecked, and some lives lost. Listeners heard one night, during the nine o'clock News, the unmistakable crash of a bomb; the announcer carried on calmly; one did not know, until later, that the studio had been wrecked all round him. Staffs had to work from ill-equipped emergency premises, alternative stations and staffs were established in the Provinces, entertainers had to travel through air-raids and dislocated traffic to take their place in the programmes. But still the devotion and enthusiasm of the B.B.C. staffs sustained them—and the millions whom they served. Interviews with typical Londoners, in streets, homes and shelters, were relayed so that the world could know what London was enduring during the Battle of Britain. Throughout the blitz period, the Overseas services not only continued, but grew, and a service of broadcasts was inaugurated to America, Latin America and the Near East.

The first foreign language broadcast had been given in January, 1938; in 1939 the B.B.C. was broadcasting in nine languages; by the winter of 1942 it grew to forty-seven—covering the earth's surface and all round the clock. Special broadcasts were added for our Forces overseas, and the staffs were augmented by members of the Dominion and other radio services. The sternest critics of the B.B.C. accuse it of officialdom, and maintain that it is drifting into "just another type of soulless Government Department." And yet I am continually surprised by the breadth of its approach to its problems, and its zest for experiment.

Among the most human and fascinating of their programmes has been the series in which personal, spoken messages keep families in touch. A mother in Australia hears the voice of her son in London; parents can talk to their sons in any part of the world; personal messages from the Dominions are broadcast to men on active service. I have seen these moving broadcasts in

operation; a group of soldiers, sailors and airmen standing in a queue on the stage of a London theatre which had been taken over by the B.B.C., waiting their turn to say a few simple words to the families who were listening thousands of miles away. In that theatre—selected in the early days of the war as the headquarters of the Empire Entertainments Unit—the producers and staff broadcast between fifty and sixty different programmes each week. I was not surprised to see camp-beds at the back of the dress circle, in the boxes, and elsewhere, or to hear that the over-worked staff had to snatch their sleep at odd hours of the twenty-four.

I was assured that they had become quite accustomed to taking their restricted ration of sleep while a full orchestra blazed away a few yards from their improvised bedrooms. To these men, their work is a vocation to which they devote their lives, and I am happy to pay a tribute to them. The vision and inspiration on which the B.B.C.'s activities are based were made manifest in the words spoken recently by Sir Cecil Graves, who, as Mr. Graves, took part in the first Empire Broadcast, and who subsequently became one of the Directors-General of the B.B.C.:

"Let us look forward to the future; we have in our hands an instrument of incalculable power for good; an instrument that makes use of the most modern conceptions of science, together with every aspect of mankind's age-old gifts of art and self-expression; an instrument that can be given wholly to spreading mutual knowledge among the nations."

PRELUDE TO PEACE

BRITAIN went back to work, after its two days of rejoicing; flags and banners still flew gaily as people returned to their jobs; each hour brought further evidence of Victory:

Our war correspondents were wandering around what had been the main launching-sites of the V2's; Dunkirk had surrendered, and our soldiers trod those historic beaches from which they had been rescued in the grimmest hours of the war; the Channel Islands—the only British soil ever held by the Germans—had become British again when twenty-two of our artillerymen landed to accept the surrender of 10,000 Germans; the King and Queen were still touring the worst-bombed districts of London, to meet and sympathize with their subjects who had “taken it” so courageously; Goering had been captured, and was busy peacocking around in a resplendent uniform, before our war correspondents and photographers; U-boats and E-boats were arriving at British ports to surrender; some of our 6,000,000 German prisoners of war were to be used to rebuild our shattered homes; the newspapers would not be short of headlines for a long while to come.

But to me—and to countless millions all over the world—Victory Week was brought to a fitting end by the man who above all others had inspired that Victory. In a broadcast talk, Winston Churchill reviewed the beginning of the war, reminding us of the early days when France and other countries were overrun, when Britain was stabbed in the back by Mussolini and left absolutely alone. He recalled the Battle of Britain, which our young airmen fought at odds of eight to one—the Royal Navy standing ever ready to tear to pieces the barges of an invading army—the Blitz, when Hitler “threatened to rub out our cities,” the days and nights when hostile aircraft could fly from Brest to Norway and observe all our movements and convoys. The sense of envelopment lay heavily upon us; there were deadly moments in our lives; if it had not been for the loyalty of Northern Ireland we should have had to come to grips with de Valera; but we left his government



(L.N.J. Photograph by Karsh)

THE RT. HON. WINSTON S. CHURCHILL, P.C., O.M., C.H., M.P.
Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, 1940-1945.

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to "frolic with the Germans and Japanese," and relied on the help of loyal Irishmen.

We were asked to remember the North-Western approaches, our merchant seamen and minesweepers, the Royal Navy and the Air Force who kept our life-lines open, the urgent need to destroy or capture the French Fleet—to despatch munitions and men to Wavell—to destroy the Italian army.

Then came the sympathetic realization by Roosevelt of mutual danger. By the early months of 1941, we were "beginning to feel a little better"; the Dunkirk men were re-equipped, we were receiving munitions from the States; nearly two million Britons, working all day, were training at night in the Home Guard. We sacrificed our armies in Cyrenaica to stand by Greece. We cleared Syria and the Lebanon—and still fought alone. On June 22nd, 1941, Hitler, who thought himself master of the world, treacherously and without warning hurled himself against Russia. Soon, Japan attacked America and ourselves.

"Never since these new Allies joined us," said Churchill, "had I the slightest doubt that we should win. From Alamein in 1942, we marched many miles, and never knew defeat. Last year, on June 6th, 1944, we secured a carefully-selected little cove in Northern France and landed millions of men. France was liberated—Germany lay open—Russia rolled forward to meet us—in Italy, Alexander's army of so many nations struck their final blow and compelled a great army to surrender. The British and Americans and Russians joined hands in Austria. In three days, the surrender of 2,500,000 soldiers was effected. Our Navy had borne the incomparably heavy burden in the Atlantic while the American navy were occupied in the Pacific. Alexander and Montgomery had never been defeated, but we owed a great tribute of gratitude to Eisenhower and to the British Chiefs of Staff who had worked together in such perfect harmony. Our strategy had been conducted so that Britain, U.S.A., and Russia could work in perfect unity."

"One final danger the German defeat saved us. We in Southern England had the flying bombs and rockets (but you may have heard of this). It was only when we attacked and captured the sites that we knew how grave had been our peril; only at the last moment did we blast the vipers from their nests; there was also a novel U-boat waiting to attack us. Let us be thankful for our timely deliverance from new perils.

"If you thought," concluded Churchill, "that I should now be put out to grass, I would retire. But I warn you that you must not weaken your alert and vigilant minds or suffer from 'the craven fear of being great.' We have to be careful that the word Freedom should lose none of its lustre. We seek nothing for ourselves, but we must make sure that the causes we fought for must not become a shield for the strong and a mockery for the weak. We must not forget that, beyond, lurks Japan. We are bound by ties of loyalty to the U.S.A. to continue this war side by side, and not forget the menace to Australia, New Zealand and Canada. I told you hard things at the beginning of these last five years; you did not shrink and I should be unworthy of your confidence and generosity if I did not still cry 'Forward, unflinchingly, unswervingly, indomitably, till the whole task is done, and the whole world safe and clean.'"

We were soon to realize that the winning of the Peace would call for all the qualities which Britain and her Allies had displayed in the winning of the war, that each day's triumph would be accompanied by threats of disaster, that Allies would suddenly prove stubborn, national claims tend to obscure wider issues, and Party politics provoke discord. The newspapers alternatively made our flesh creep and tried to restore our confidence, local and domestic items tried to look as important as the pronouncements of the "Big Three." The fighting in Europe had ceased, but our swords were not yet turned into ploughshares. More U-boats and E-boats were surrendering; we were promised more petrol, and began to hope that our old car might soon be on the road again; a tribute to the King was paid by the Commons and the Lords; cricket reopened at the other Lords, and Goering, sitting on a sunny lawn at Augsburg, in a pearl-grey uniform with gold epaulettes, was again permitted to air his views on the war.

This treatment of one of the chief Nazi gangsters so infuriated America and Russia that Eisenhower soon administered a very stern reprimand to the Allied officers concerned, and "hand-shakes with gangsters" promptly ceased. We read with special pleasure that Schuschnigg, Pastor Niemoller, and other victims of Nazi bestiality had been freed from their long captivity, and, side by side with this news, were irritated by the specious attacks on Hitler and his regime by Nazi generals.

The promise of dining-cars on our main-line trains, plans for housing and for the release of men from the Forces, pretty pictures

of our post-war cars lost their savour when they had to share the news with almost daily statements that Stalin had adopted a still firmer antagonism to Britain and America in regard to the Polish situation. Eisenhower, Montgomery, Bradley and Patton arrived in London for a few days' leave, interrupted by conferences, and Marshal Tito's threatened occupation of Trieste produced a very strong note from Field Marshal Alexander. "Peace" had already disclosed some very ugly problems, which provoked several acid questions to the Government, in the House of Commons.

We began to read, with growing satisfaction, of the capture of the chief Nazi "big shots." The fate of Hitler, Himmler, Goebbels and Ribbentrop was still uncertain, but those definitely in our hands included Goering, Von Papen, Franck, Ley, Rosenberg, Dietrich and Schwartz, with the chiefs of the German High Command—Doenitz, Keitel, Jodl, Speer, Kesselring and Rundstedt. Meanwhile, Willi Messerschmidt, the designer of the "M.E.," was alleged to be living in a West End luxury flat; de Valera had replied ambiguously to the Prime Minister's attack on him; every succeeding day reminded us that we were not to be allowed to sink into carefree lethargy. While we had been heartened by the freeing of the Channel Islands, while we read eagerly of the capture of some of the more notorious Nazi leaders, we were shocked at the serious statement from San Francisco by Anthony Eden as to our disagreements with Russia about Poland.

We were still hunting for Himmler, while Nagoya, the home of Japan's biggest aircraft factories was being laid waste by Super-Fortresses, and 750,000 men and women in our Services were promised demobilization by the end of the year. Civilians were officially informed that the present clothes-rationing would continue until August, 1946, and that we were to be allowed a basic petrol ration—with accompanying limitations; Russia promptly cut into our domestic news with a warning that the German military clique and the Hitlerite gang were obviously double-crossing us. The Second Army rounded up four more Nazi bosses, including Himmler's S.S. Chief, Ernst Kaltenbrunner and that notorious thug, Col. "Scarface" Skorzeny; Anthony Eden returned from San Francisco and informed the House of Commons that there were a number of serious and disquieting issues clouding the international situation. Stalin's explanation of the arrest of sixteen Polish delegates made it clear that he was adamant in his attitude to the complex Polish situation, while sports enthusiasts

were dismayed to receive the Victory Test Match news that Len Hutton, the Yorkshire star, had been caught out with a score of 1.

And vast crowds, throwing to the winds any preoccupation with the aftermath of war, crowded the railway stations and went to the sea to enjoy their first Whitsun Holiday of Peace. The sudden storms which drove picnic and beach parties to shelter seemed symptomatic of the world at Whitsuntide. The Press sought vainly to capture a holiday mood, and at length had to tell grim stories of the Whitsun Wash-out. U-boat crews marched to captivity, pugnacious to the last, and singing at the top of their voices the jovial ballad, "We march against England"; Russia expressed amazement and annoyance at the rendering of military honours to high-ranking German officers; a captured U-boat was to be exhibited at Westminster Bridge; and newspapers with a strong Party bias were very busy discussing the date of the General Election.

New Allied negotiations tried to end the Trieste deadlock, while Marshal Tito endeavoured to evade the main issues, and the San Francisco Conference was wallowing in the doldrums. The gloom was relieved for women by special articles in which experts advised them how to repair wartime ravages of lustreless hair, dry skins, work-worn hands and undisciplined figures, while the general reader was regaled with a story that an alluring typist had been the power behind the Fuehrer. Such trivialities had little opportunity to attract more than momentary attention, for another shock was about to be administered to the nation.

A Conference was held by the Socialist Party at Blackpool, at which the National Executive considered proposals by the Prime Minister, sent through Mr. Attlee—that the Coalition should continue until the end of the war with Japan, or that alternatively a General Election should take place well before the autumn. A similar proposal was made to Sir Archibald Sinclair, leader of the Liberal Party. Attlee's reply accused Churchill, who had rejected the idea of an autumn election, as based not on national interests, but on Party expediency. Sir Archibald Sinclair expressed his willingness to discuss the Prime Minister's proposal, the Liberal Nationals supported it.

The discussion flared up immediately into a Party conflict, of which the newspapers gave the fullest news and views. Opinions by representatives of each of the parties grew increasingly acrimonious; the Prime Minister, replying to Mr. Attlee's letter, said:

"It is odd that you should accompany so many unjust allegations with an earnest request that we should go on bickering together till the autumn. Such a process could not be a decent way of carrying on a British Government."

By the next day, the Prime Minister had tendered his resignation to the King, and had immediately been entrusted with the task of forming a "Caretaker Government" to conduct the business of the country until a new administration had been elected by the will of the people. The battle was on! General Election—that doughty warrior who had been in retirement for ten years—captured the newspaper headlines. Morrison and Bevin made fighting speeches promising a Labour millennium, and the world was once again amazed that the leaders of Britain, who had only just emerged from the organization of Victory, should now turn on their colleagues and accuse them of political trickery. The situation provided perfect confirmation of Attlee's statement, "The mere absence of War is *not* Peace."

One must not suggest that General Election's control of the nation's news was unchallenged. On the very day when the dissolution of Parliament was announced, two items of news claimed our attention and restored our spirits. The first told us that Admiral Doenitz and all the remaining members of the German General Staff had been arrested at Flensburg. One of the signatories to the German capitulation, Admiral-General von Friedeburg, promptly committed suicide. The others were removed to captivity.

The second news item revealed a well-kept war secret which deserves to be bracketed with "Mulberry" as an amazing example of British enterprise. This was the story of "Pluto"—a pipe-line laid on the bed of the ocean, from a 90-foot long drum. On this "Conun-drum," steel pipes were wound as on a cotton reel. "Pluto" began its operations a few weeks after D-Day, five hundred miles of pipe-line were eventually laid, and over a million gallons of petrol were pumped daily, through a continually lengthening line which eventually stretched from the Mersey to Berlin.

Compared to such a stupendous practical achievement as the "Pluto" pipe-line, is it any wonder that Mr. Bevin's twelve-point Labour programme for World Peace and Security seemed to belong to a visionary's pipe dreams—and that Mr. Morrison's fierce statement, "Labour will stand no nonsense from the

Lords!" merely reminded us of many previous political threats which had failed to make our flesh creep. We remembered that, for five years, Labour, Liberals and Conservatives, had worked together as a splendid National Government; and the sudden allegation (for obviously party purposes) that their friends were shady, unscrupulous characters, didn't ring true. The world must surely have gained the impression that Britain had suddenly collapsed under its years of strain.

The world was to be still more puzzled when the leaders rolled their sleeves and really got busy with their war of words. Mr. Churchill was first off the mark, by delivering eight speeches in five hours, during a tour of his constituency. The mere thought that Churchill would ever be expected to appeal to his electorate for votes was surely evidence that Britain had gone crazy.

Meanwhile, another figure stepped into the limelight, that of the greatest of all the Nazi gangsters—Heinrich Himmler—the head of the Gestapo. He had been captured, while travelling under an assumed name. A British sergeant-major gave this blunt account of Himmler's arrival in custody: "As he came into the room, dressed in an army shirt and a pair of underpants, with a blanket wrapped round him, I immediately recognized him as Himmler. Speaking to him in German, and pointing to an empty couch, I said, 'That's your bed. Get undressed.' He looked at me, and then at an interpreter, and said, 'He doesn't know who I am.' I said, 'Yes I do. You're Himmler. And that's still your bed. Get undressed!'"

The prisoner was then examined, special care being taken by a doctor and colonel to discover whether he was secreting poison. During the final stages of a searching examination, Himmler bit open a small phial containing cyanide of potassium, which had been concealed in his mouth, and died in fifteen minutes. In the words of the Moscow radio, "The devil's lieutenant had returned to his master." After reading Himmler's obituaries, and expressing the greatest disappointment that the foulest of all the Nazi murderers had cheated the hangman, Britain returned to the absorbing subject of its own domestic troubles, which included reductions in rations—including cooking fats, bacon and soap—and the worst shortage of the war in beer and cigarettes.

Mr. Churchill promptly announced the names of his new Cabinet and other Ministers.

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The Caretaker Government made its bow to a crowded and excited House of Commons on May 29th, and, in the words of one Parliamentary correspondent, "Passion was let loose. It was just like the good old days of peace." Morrison promptly sprang to the attack, from the Opposition bench, and Eden advised him not to generate so much heat; Churchill and Bevin crossed swords, and much party entertainment was provided. But the Parliamentary news had to take a back seat on the morning after, for William Joyce, the Radio traitor, more notoriously known as "Lord Haw Haw" had been captured; and he had to share the headlines with another captured Nazi criminal, the Jew-baiter, Streicher.

Soon, more serious international matters claimed our attention. The situation in Syria and Lebanon had developed into a minor war, in which the French shelled Damascus, and the crisis became so serious that Britain, America and Russia were in constant touch with each other. Churchill sent a firm note to General de Gaulle, telling him that British troops had been ordered to intervene, to prevent the further effusion of blood, and requesting that the French troops should cease fire at once and return to their barracks. The Arab states were incensed at the French policy, but the prospect of warfare between France and Britain raised the gravest issues.

While this problem in the Levant was clouding our thoughts, the Government revealed another wartime secret, which deserved to be bracketed with "Mulberry," the harbour, and "Pluto" the pipe-line, as outstanding achievements of our scientists and technicians. This addition to the two already famous enterprises bore the playful code-name of "Fido"—and abbreviation of "Fog—Intensive Dispersal of." It was a device for clearing fog from bombing runways, which enabled bombers to land in the thickest fog, thus saving the lives of many valuable air-crews, and permitting bombing operations to be carried out uninterruptedly from the most fogbound aerodromes. Not for the first time did we pray that the native genius which had provided so many solutions to our wartime problems would come to our aid in dispersing the already dense fogs of Peace.

A series of crises and alarms disturbed post-war Europe from the early days of June. First there was the trouble in Syria, and British intervention, which de Gaulle resented bitterly. While this trouble was at its height, Anthony Eden was taken ill and ordered

to rest. The Government released a further wartime secret, and we were given details of "Fougasse," an anti-invasion weapon—a line of defences which was ready to turn the Channel into a sea of flame. Discharged through pipes under the sea, oil, automatically ignited, would have met German assault craft in a belt of fire, while concealed nozzles would spray a screen of flaming oil on any landing area.

The San Francisco Conference was still labouring under heavy weather, owing to Soviet opposition to certain vital clauses. And then, on June 4th, the Election fever began to infect the country. Churchill broadcast his first speech, a provocative attack on Socialism which pictured its leaders as capable of fulfilling the functions of a Gestapo. This speech was a challenge which Labour, and the other parties opposed to the Government, accepted with alacrity; for the next four weeks the air and the Party Press were full of recriminations. The selfless service to the country which had characterized the Coalition conduct of the war now degenerated into violent Party strife, which disgusted the bulk of the people as greatly as it mystified the rest of the world who had regarded Britain as united, and devoted to a great Cause.

Lord Beaverbrook's championship of the Conservative Party roused his political opponents to fury. Each member of the former Coalition Cabinet seemed suddenly to discover grave faults in his colleagues, and the air every day grew thicker with accusations, jibes and attacks.

There was a welcome break when Eisenhower arrived in London to receive the Freedom of the City, which he acknowledged in a noble, statesmanlike speech; the Labour Party were apparently mollified when they heard that Attlee had been invited to join in the forthcoming Big Three Conference in Berlin; and world-wide interest was aroused by Lord Wavell's efforts to solve the deadlock which had for so long existed between Britain and the Indian Leaders. Then the name of Professor Harold Laski, Chairman of the Socialist Party, flared into the headlines with a pronouncement that his Party would not be bound by the decision of the "Big Three." A furore developed, writs for libel were issued, and the Prime Minister seized on Laski's statement with avidity.

The fact that Okinawa had fallen to the Americans, after heavy fighting in the Pacific, and that ninety thousand Japanese had been killed in its defence, seemed relatively unimportant com-

pared to the wordy battles which raged all over Britain; Moscow's agreement on Poland seemed to lose interest beside the stories of the Prime Minister's electioneering tour through the Midlands and the North; the spate of talk by leaders and other candidates grew into a torrent. Then, at last, something of real importance occurred.

The representatives of fifty nations had signed the Charter of the United Nations, after nine weeks' deliberations at San Francisco; but, the Election still refused to be ignored. The Prime Minister, forty-eight hours before Polling Day, made another scathing attack on Laski—and delivered an ultimatum that Attlee must disown his alleged master. Attlee made a quite calm and ambiguous reply, which shirked the main challenge; the Prime Minister made one final three-night tour of East London; and Election Day was upon us.

We duly recorded our votes in the first General Election for ten years, and heaved a sigh of relief that the nightly political broadcasts were at last over. Meanwhile, other events had occurred which were destined to have a far more lasting influence than floods of Party oratory. Fraternization between Allied soldiers and German civilians was already becoming a problem; a joint declaration was signed in Berlin by Britain, the United States, Russia and France, which divided Germany into four occupational zones, each to be controlled by one of the four Powers who were to assume supreme authority for the control of the Reich.

An agreement was reached for the Allied occupation of the Trieste area, which had threatened a breach between Yugoslavia and the Allies, and Montgomery gave the German people the first official explanation of the reasons for non-fraternization. He told the Germans quite bluntly that, this time, the Allies were determined that Germany should learn the lesson, not only that it had been completely defeated in the field, but that it had been guilty of beginning the war.

On June 15th, von Ribbentrop was captured. He was found by the Field Security Police, in bed in a Hamburg boarding-house, with a tin of poison strapped to his body. London's welcome to Eisenhower was equalled by the acclamation of Paris, where he was decorated with the Cross of Liberation; and, on the same day, Parliament was dissolved.

On July 6th, the Desert Rats completed their long journey from

Alamein to Berlin, formally inaugurating the British occupation of their allotted section of the German capital. Later, a hitch occurred, the Russians holding up the Allied Berlin Control plan owing to a temporary disagreement on the question of food supplies; news from the Far East told us that an all-out blitz on Tokio was in progress, and from America came the statement that President Truman was on his way to the Big Three Conference in Berlin. Three days afterwards the Conference opened in Potsdam where, under conditions of the closest secrecy, Churchill, Stalin, Truman and their principal colleagues began to debate their plans for the new world.

The Press was only permitted to record the merest trivialities of this vital meeting, and while they indulged in much speculation—accompanied by loud indignation at official secrecy—we read of continued air attacks on Japanese cities, and the shelling of Japan by British and American warships. The trial of "Lord Haw-Haw" was postponed until September so that investigations as to his nationality could be continued. The much more important trial of Marshal Petain opened in Paris, while the Belgian Government announced its decision that King Leopold must abdicate. On July 15th, Churchill, Eden and Attlee flew back to London from Potsdam to await the Election result.

This result contradicted all the surmises and prophecies of political experts or the public, by returning the Socialist Party to power with a majority over all other Parties of 153 seats. Churchill addressed the nation for the last time as its wartime Premier, in a message from Downing Street, tendered his resignation to the King, and Attlee became Prime Minister.

"Immense responsibilities," Churchill stated in his farewell message, "abroad and at home, fall upon the new Government, and we must all hope that they will be successful in bearing them. It only remains for me to express to the British people, for whom I have acted in these perilous years, my profound gratitude for the unflinching, unswerving support they have given me in my task, and for the many expressions of kindness which they have shown towards their servant."

And so, Britain's incomparable wartime leader laid down the burdens of his office, and Attlee, having formed his Government, returned to Potsdam as our new spokesman, with Ernest Bevin as Eden's successor. While we were waiting for the release of information as to the decisions of the Big Three, it was announced that

Field Marshal Alexander had been appointed Governor-General of Canada, that Laval had been delivered up to the French authorities to be charged with treason, and that the Japanese in eleven cities had been warned—by leaflets dropped from Super-Fortresses—to evacuate their cities or perish.

On August 3rd, the long-awaited Communiqué from Potsdam was published. It settled Germany's future by disarming and demilitarizing the country, eliminating or controlling all arms industries, abolishing German fighting forces of every description, and establishing a Council of the five principal Powers to ensure the complete destruction of all traces of Hitlerism and to formulate plans for the government of Germany on democratic principles. Clauses on the punishment of war criminals, on reparations, the revision of laws, education, religion, territorial boundaries and every other aspect of German national life were included in this historic document framing the new life of the nation which had for so long been a menace to world peace.

At the final session of the Conference, Truman, Stalin and Attlee sent this message to Winston Churchill: "They wish to thank him for all his work in the first part of the Conference, which helped greatly to lay the foundation for its successful conclusion. They remember with gratitude the untiring efforts and the unconquerable spirit with which, at earlier conferences and throughout the war he served our common cause of victory and enduring peace. The whole world knows the greatness of his work, and it will never be forgotten."

DAYS OF JUDGMENT

THE Ministerial appointments to the new British Government, and the war in the Far East, were the main news items which followed the Potsdam Conference. A Foreign Office announcement disclosed that plans had been co-ordinated by which Britain would, in conjunction with her American allies, bring all her naval, land and air forces to bear against Japan; but a statement was about to be released which threatened not merely to affect the final stages of the war, but to alter the whole future course of world history.

For, at 11 a.m. on August 6th, President Truman announced that British and American scientists, working together, had harnessed the "basic power of the Universe," and that, a few hours earlier, the first atomic bomb had fallen on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. It was a small bomb, but equal in power to 20,000 tons of "T.N.T.," or 2,000 times as powerful as Britain's largest 22,000-lb. bomb. Work on the atomic bomb had been carried out in the strictest secrecy at two big and many lesser plants in America and Canada, and a total of £500 millions had already been spent on experiments.

An official announcement was issued from 10 Downing Street by Attlee, introducing a statement by Winston Churchill, who had been associated with secret atomic bomb experiments during his term of office. Churchill disclosed that, by the year 1939, it had become widely recognized among scientists of many nations that the release of energy by "Atomic Fission" was a possibility. The potentialities of the project were so great that His Majesty's Government decided that research should be pressed forward, at first mainly in our Universities. Responsibility for co-ordinating the work lay in the Ministry of Aircraft Production, advised by a committee of leading scientists presided over by Sir George Thomson. There was also a full interchange of ideas between scientists carrying out the work in the United Kingdom and the United States.

Such progress was made that, by the summer of 1941, Sir George Thomson's committee considered that there was a reason-

able chance of an atomic bomb being produced by the end of the war. The Chiefs of Staffs' Committee recommended that the whole problem should be given maximum priority; various scientific bodies and experts were invited to collaborate, and, as great progress was also being made in the United States, President Roosevelt proposed co-ordination of effort by the British and American scientists concerned. A number of British experts at once proceeded to America for this purpose. In 1942, full-scale production plants were built in America, Canada also contributed its talents and resources, and, in Churchill's words, "By God's mercy, British and American science outpaced all German efforts, which were already on a considerable scale." The destruction of German plants known to be concerned with atomic experiments was only achieved with very heavy loss of British lives.

"It is now," Churchill concluded, "for Japan to realize, in the glare of the first atomic bomb which has smitten her, what the consequences will be of an indefinite continuance of this terrible means of maintaining a rule of law. This revelation of the secrets of nature, long mercifully withheld from man, should arouse the most solemn reflections in the mind and conscience of every human being capable of comprehension. We must indeed pray that these awful agencies will be made to conduce to peace among the nations, and that, instead of wrecking measureless havoc upon the entire globe, they may become a perennial fountain of world prosperity."

The first announcement of the atomic bomb synchronized with preliminary stories of its effects. Many hours after the first bomb had been dropped on Hiroshima, the city, covering an area of three by four miles, with 300,000 inhabitants, was covered by an impenetrable dust-cloud. We were soon to know that Hiroshima had suffered almost complete obliteration. Tokio radio broadcast that "The Atom Bomb literally seared to death all living things—human and animal. People outdoors were burned to death, and those indoors were killed by the indescribable pressure and heat. The dead are uncountable. The power of destruction is beyond words." The first Allied account stated that reconnaissance photographs, taken as soon as the immense seven and a half miles high mountain of smoke had cleared, showed that the heart of the city had been wiped out with the awful thoroughness of a giant bulldozer, and that more than four square miles of the city's built-up area were completely destroyed.

The United States Navy Department warned the Japanese nation that they must now take their choice of mass suicide or surrender; and, on the next day, Russia added to Japan's anxieties by declaring war on her and launching an attack on the Soviet-Manchurian frontier. The news was promptly followed by the announcement that a second atomic bomb had been dropped on Nagasaki—the very important shipbuilding, manufacturing centre and naval base—and that Japan's war leaders had been summoned to an emergency meeting to consider the succession of terrifying blows which had fallen on them.

And then, far sooner than even the Allied experts had expected, there flashed across the world the news, "JAPAN SURRENDERS!" But there was one very important reservation to Japan's offer. They announced that they were willing to accept the terms of the Potsdam Conference—on condition that the Emperor Hiroshito retained his prerogatives as sovereign ruler. The Potsdam conditions, though they imposed the sternest conditions that Japanese militaristic influence must be eradicated for ever, that the country would be occupied by the Allies, that their war criminals would be punished, and that every vestige of war industry would be erased, made no specific reference to their Emperor; and the world remained in suspense until the Allied Governments had come to a mutual decision regarding Japan's "Son of Heaven."

Less than a hundred hours had elapsed between the falling of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and the Japanese offer to surrender. The bomb had not only wiped out a great city, but reduced a savagely warlike nation to helplessness. What was to be the fate of their little bespectacled Emperor, who represented an unbroken dynasty of rulers stretching back 2,600 years—rulers whom their subjects regarded as divine? While the world was waiting for the decision of the Allied Governments as to Japan's conditional surrender, Victory celebrations had already commenced in London, New York, and other capitals. A flood of ticker-tape and torn paper descended from the windows of many London buildings, and crowds danced and sang; while the smoke of Nagasaki was still visible 250 miles away from Japan's second atomic bomb target, Stalin's armies continued to pour across the frontiers of Japan's inner empire; all the signs indicated that her years of aggression, treachery and bestial cruelty had come to an end.

The horrors of the long Chinese war, the humiliating tragedies of Pearl Harbour, Rangoon and Singapore were about to be avenged, if not by the unconditional capitulation of Japan, by a resumption of the atomic bomb and other attacks, which would inevitably banish the Yellow Peril from the earth. The bombs which had battered Pearl Harbour and half the American Pacific fleet, and which destroyed Great Britain's great battleships, the *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*, had been answered by one small bomb which reduced Japan's dreams of conquest to dust and ashes; Oriental visions of world-domination had been succeeded by a nightmare of unimaginable horrors.

The question as to how the Allied Governments would answer Japan's offer occupied all our thoughts. Leader-writers of the national newspapers dealt with the problem from many angles. American, Russian and Chinese views were quoted, and we were all made aware that the retention of Hirohito's power presented elements of the gravest danger. The leader-writer of *The Times*, in a very wise and comprehensive study of the situation, pointed out that, if the sovereign prerogatives of the Emperor could be safeguarded by the Japanese, they would still have a pivot on which their national machine could once again turn towards limitless aggression, however their present fortunes were clouded; for the "divine" authority of their leader would remain unimpaired whatever changes of government might be imposed by the temporarily victorious Allies. Behind Japan's conditional offer was obviously, in the words of the *Evening Standard*, their thought that "The Throne, the nation's altar, is the sole remaining asset. If, in the nation's eyes that can be kept free from the stigma of defeat, then there may yet come a time when Japan will again resume her sacred destiny of world-domination."

Japan and the world had only a few hours to wait before the Allies replied. The terms of that reply stated the Allied attitude towards the Emperor's "sovereign prerogatives" very definitely, in these words:

"From the moment of surrender the authority of the Emperor to rule the State shall be subject to the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, who will take such steps as he deems proper to give effect to the surrender terms. The Emperor will be required to authorize and ensure signature by the Government of Japan and the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters of surrender terms necessary to carry out the provisions of the Potsdam

Declaration, and shall issue his commands to all Japanese military, naval and air forces under their control, wherever located, to cease active operations and to surrender their arms, and to issue such other orders as the Supreme Commander may require to give effect to the surrender terms.

"Immediately upon surrender the Japanese Government shall transport prisoners of war and civilian internees to places of safety as directed, where they can quickly be placed on board Allied transports. The ultimate form of the government of Japan shall, in accordance with the Potsdam Ultimatum, be established by the freely expressed will of the Japanese people. The armed forces of the Allied Powers will remain in Japan until the purposes set forth at Potsdam are achieved."

The acceptance of these terms obviously implied that the divinity of the "Son of Heaven," and his sovereign prerogatives, would be firmly controlled by the Supreme Allied Commander, and that Hirohito would become an instrument by which Allied orders would be enforced. In no more complete way, surely, could the Japanese nation be reminded of the magnitude of their defeat or of the "loss of face" which that defeat had brought to their exalted ruler and the entire nation. Would the Japanese reply by mass "hara-kiri," or by submission? How would she face the abandonment of all her dreams of conquest, the loss of all the territory she had gained in eight years of war, the fruits of fifty years of planning for world-domination?

The Allied nations were kept in suspense for three days before the final Japanese capitulation was announced. On several occasions rumour was accepted as truth, and premature Peace "flashes" revived celebrations. Meanwhile, the Tokio area was being bombed, the American and British navies were ready for instant action, and the Soviet forces were attacking with unabated vigour. Intermingled with official denials of Japan's acceptance, and warnings against possible Japanese treachery, was a flood of disclosures, speculations and prophecies as to the atomic bomb. Scientists and preachers talked at length on the theme that the bomb either meant the end of war or the end of the world.

Newspapers which burst into giant headlines "Japs Accept!" sold their news at least thirty hours before it was authentic. London, Paris and New York, Brisbane and Canberra indulged in a further series of premature celebrations. V-J Days were announced in advance—and contradicted, radio statements from

New York and Paris proved to be unfounded, excitement was kept at fever heat, unconfirmed reports followed each other incessantly; and it was not until midnight on Tuesday, August 14th, that Attlee announced, in a B.B.C. broadcast, the official news that Japan had surrendered and that "the last of our enemies had been laid low." He read the Japanese reply, which accepted, in the name of the Emperor, all the Allied demands, and closed his statement with a brief review of the course of the war, thanking all the men and women of the Allied Services who had contributed to this overwhelming victory. Then he announced that Wednesday and Thursday, August 15th and 16th, would be given over to rejoicing. Rejoicing had already begun in the Allied capitals.

New York gave itself up to its own type of pandemonium, which soon developed into the wildest, maddest tumult in the whole of the city's history. In London, crowds thronged Piccadilly Circus and massed around Buckingham Palace all through the night; and, while the Press was endeavouring to cram into its four-page papers the official announcement of Peace, and of the world's reactions, the Government disclosed another of its wartime secrets—the Radar beam which, in the words of Sir Stafford Cripps, "Had made a bigger contribution to the final victory over Germany than any other scientific factor, and that it possessed far more immediate potentialities for human service than even the splitting of the atom."

The miracle of Radar was, in the view of the peoples of the Allied nations, infinitely less important than the miracle of Peace. The fact that Japan's beaten war-lords, and their Emperor whose divinity had been deflated, tried to explain away their defeat with characteristic Oriental subtlety, left the crowds of the Allied capitals utterly unconcerned.

The Day of Deliverance had come at last; and they were determined to make the most of it. London stood in the rain to cheer the King and Queen on their way to the State Opening of Parliament, and then spent hysterical hours outside Buckingham Palace demanding that the Royal Family should appear on the balcony to receive their further tributes. Six times, between midday and midnight, the King and Queen with their children greeted the mighty crowd, and when finally the lights at the Palace windows were extinguished, the still delirious thousands continued their celebrations elsewhere. There were 200 casualties

—a very small proportion of the mighty throngs who continued their jubilations.

In Parliament, the Prime Minister and Winston Churchill had both made moving speeches expressing the nation's indebtedness to the Crown. The Prime Minister reminded the House that the King and Queen had shared in our anxieties, tribulations, and our suffering, throughout the war, and that the shadow of bereavement had fallen upon them as it had fallen on the homes of the people. The King and Queen had set us an example of courage and devotion which will not be forgotten, and by this and their sympathy had strengthened the bond uniting them to their people. At nine o'clock the King himself broadcast, with stirring manliness and sincerity, a message to the world.

The pride of London and the triumph of Peace were demonstrated, not only by the joy of its citizens, but at night-time by the flood-lit splendour of Buckingham Palace, Westminster Abbey, the Houses of Parliament, St. Paul's, and other famous buildings. While we were celebrating, the war had still to be finished in the Far East. Japanese planes were still attacking British warships—and being shot out of the skies; the Emperor's orders had not yet been received in distant battlefields, and fighting would be continued for some days. In the House of Commons, Churchill stated that the decision to use the atomic bomb had been taken by President Truman and himself a month previously, that he had no regrets for this decision, and no one could measure the cost in British and American lives and treasure which had been saved.

Australia, reviewing Hirohito's broadcast, summed it up not as a humble and heartbroken confession of defeat, but as the speech of a defiant man leading a defiant nation, and, analysing his statements, saw in them a tissue of audacious lies which were nothing but the diabolically clever propaganda of a brazen war-criminal. Hirohito was soon explaining the unavoidable delays in choosing and sending his representatives to the Supreme Allied Commander's Headquarters to sign the formal surrender, and the time which must necessarily elapse before his orders could be obeyed by his armies in such far-distant battlefields as New Guinea and the Philippines.

Meanwhile, the Allies were making plans for the occupation of Japan; Petain, found guilty of treachery, had been condemned to death—the sentence later being commuted to imprisonment for

life; Parliament was discussing the vast programmes which it had to face; America was already cancelling Army contracts for over £9,000,000 as a first step to post-war reconversion; and our Government was announcing its intention to release over 1,000,000 men and women from the Forces by the end of the year.

A new era for the world was beginning; the new Government had begun its work in a manner worthy of a great tradition; and Britain went back to face the problems of Peace with the stoical philosophy which it had shown during the years of war—which it had always shown.

* * * * *

Standing in Trafalgar Square on the morning of Peace Day and looking at the tens of thousands of men, women and children crowded together in the rain, I thought of earlier celebrations—of the happy throngs at Queen Victoria's Jubilee, of the riotous exuberance of Mafeking Day, of the drizzling rain through which King George and Queen Mary passed to St. Paul's on Armistice Day twenty-seven years ago, of the loyalty and thankfulness with which their subjects greeted our present King and Queen at their Coronation.

It was the same crowd, on each of these occasions; changing fashions had done nothing to alter its character; these were people who had normally led quiet, uneventful lives, but who displayed heroic qualities when faced with trouble and danger—people who seldom expressed their feelings in wild emotion, but who lost few opportunities of showing their gratitude—people who considered it fitting to get together on great occasions—to celebrate as members of one big family; and I was proud to be among them.

In the Prologue to this review of fifty years, I endeavoured to summarize the elements of British character—that strength, tolerance and invincible philosophy which governs its actions—the fact that trouble has always called forth its best efforts—that self-control and discipline have enabled Britons to weather their fiercest storms.

To these characteristics the King paid tribute in his broadcast on the night when we celebrated the victory over Japan:

"In many anxious times in our long history, the unconquerable spirit of our peoples has served us well, bringing us to safety out of great peril. Yet I doubt if anything in all that has gone before

has matched the enduring courage and the quiet determination which you have shown during these last six years. We have our part to play in restoring the shattered fabric of civilization. It is to this great task that I call you now; and I know that I shall not call in vain."

* * * * *

The realization of the trials which we had still to face recalled to me once more the most vital battle of the war—the Battle of Britain—which lasted for three months, from August to October, 1940.

All we saw of this epic struggle was a series of tiny specks in a sunlit sky, and a constantly changing pattern of white vapour-trails from three to six miles above us. Those trails came from Spitfires, Hurricanes and Defiants, piloted by boys.

We were not to know, until five years later, that our invincible young airmen fought against odds of four to one, and how perilously near to defeat we were in those days. Our losses were desperately serious, and, had they continued, they would have put Fighter Command out of battle, and laid Britain open to invasion. But the enemy losses were even more severe. On one day in September the R.A.F. shot down 185 Hun aircraft for a loss of only 25 of ours. The Luftwaffe retired, so badly damaged that they could not continue the struggle. Their defeat lost Germany the war.

Five years later, on September 15th, 1945, Group-Captain Bader, legless fighter pilot, hoisted himself into his Mark-9 Spitfire, to lead 300 planes in a Thanksgiving flight over London. Eleven other Battle of Britain pilots led their squadrons of infinitely faster machines—Mustangs, Mosquitoes, Tempests, Beau-fighters and jet-propelled Meteors—which had superseded the Hurricanes and Spitfires of 1940.

And as, on the Anniversary day, the machines roared triumphantly over London, we remembered with pride and gratitude those very gallant young heroes, and their comrades—"The few to whom the many owe so much"—who gave their lives to save their country from invasion and, in so doing, saved the world.

EPILOGUE

AS I reach the final stages of my journey, personal experiences and adventures leap disturbingly into the foreground of my memory.

I live again those nights in our dug-out at home, when sleep was ended suddenly by the wail of the siren, and I tumbled from my improvised bed to become an amateur fire-fighter. I see myself on the roof of a building in the Strand during the worst air-raid on London, and recall that five-mile walk home after a strenuous night. The scene changes to the Palace Theatre during a *matinée*. Cicely Courtneidge is alone on the stage, singing "Home is the Place Where My Heart Is": I cannot hear a word, for a shattering barrage overhead greets another group of Hun raiders. Cicely carries on, apparently unmoved, and dominating the audience by her artistry.

I am in a building which an incendiary bomb has converted into a bonfire, and am rescuing two typewriters—I am in an empty house throwing pails of water on to blazing furniture—I am helping to clear the wreckage of the "Sun" headquarters in London, and returning later to my own wrecked home. Trivial, typical incidents of one man's war.

Did one face this kind of trouble with a grim face and a jutting jaw? Did Britain as a whole give any outward sign that it was enduring great trials, or that it had reached breaking point? The answer to all such questions is an emphatic "No."

Somehow, throughout the war, one was stimulated, energized, supercharged—capable of bearing any strain. Hidden reserves of strength enabled one to endure lack of sleep and to face the next day's adventures without weariness. The little worries were swept away, and one was left capable of facing almost any trouble. There was always a group of philosophers, optimists, or natural comedians in those air-raid shelters; the buses and trains were seldom short of a cockney wisecrack; we went off to our work yawning, after a night of air raids, but soon recovered our cheerfulness in the company of comrades with whom we swapped stories. We faced bad news and good with the same shrug of the shoulders; cheerfulness somehow invaded our grimmest days; we saw no end to the war, and told each other that the first twenty years were always the worst.

I like to recall my bus-conductor, who came on to the top deck, around which every window was closed; we were all smoking hard, and he could hardly see his passengers through the haze. "Now then," he shouted, "don't be afraid to open a window. We don't charge extra for fresh air. And," he added, "someone's smoking bloater paste!" I also think with pleasure of that conductress who refused to take another passenger on her already overcrowded bus. In answer to his abuse, she calmly retorted, "All right, sweetheart! You won't make me come out in spots!"

I see the war as an incredible mixture of heroism and humour, of tragedy and philosophy. I am sure that we were all uplifted by a certain pride that we were "in the thick of it," and were given strength to see it through. Are we a people who need the stimulus and challenge of war, or of other tremendous events, to enable us to rise to our full stature? I wonder, now, how we ever became resigned to the blackout, to those years in which, especially during winter nights, a dimmed torch helped us to grope our way through pitch-black streets, or we waited interminably in bus queues, or tried in vain to find a taxi.

How did we reconcile ourselves to the blackout in our homes, which had to prevent the tiniest chink of light escaping through the windows—to the grimmer days when the windows themselves were blasted from their frames and the cavities were filled hastily with linen, canvas, or any other available substitute, which flapped incessantly in the wind and created draughts which banished warmth and comfort; to the visitations of V.1's and V.2's which destroyed our homes, or made them uninhabitable?

I shall always remember that early morning after one of our very bad raids, when the two houses next to mine were demolished, and I was confronted with Surrealist pictures of a neighbour's chimney-stack embedded in our tennis court, and of our garden being converted into a builder's refuse dump. I see again the streets which I had used daily made impassable overnight, and ironically labelled "Diversion." I hear the shopkeepers' signature tunes, "No Cigarettes," "No Whiskey," "No Razor-blades," "No Fountain Pens"; and the weary housewife's theme-song, "No Anything!"

Every now and then comes a parcel of food and clothing from friends in America who cheer us with their practical sympathy, and enquire continually about our safety.

Though life during the air-raid periods involved ever-present

uncertainty and danger, I think that it was the minor factors which we found most difficult to endure—the darkened buses, in which one sat unable to read, the blacked-out trains, the railway stations from which identification signs had been removed, and the names of which the few remaining porters seldom announced.

The most striking picture of travel in war-time London was surely provided by the Underground Railways, their platforms lined with bunks, in which tens of thousands of people slept, for months on end, while the overcrowded trains rushed in and out by their bedsides. The windows of these trains were covered with opaque material, and, while one clung to a strap in a stifling carriage, the imperturbable good humour and philosophy of Britain was illustrated by the David Langdon poster, in which a cheerful idiot, aimlessly pulling off the window covering, was politely reminded by a fellow traveller:

“I trust you’ll pardon my correction,
That stuff is there for your protection.”

The crowds who slept securely in the “Tubes” every night, while the bombs fell and the barrage roared far above their heads, were invariably good-humoured; those who had lived alone or who had lost their homes found companionship which they had never known, in the busy life of the public shelters with which London was so fully provided. In those communal meeting-places they shared their troubles, sang their choruses, and fell off to sleep until the “All Clear” sounded.

War-time London presented many extraordinary pictures; the streets crowded with sailors, soldiers and airmen of all the Allied nations—Americans and Poles, French, Negroes, Chinese—and with women in the Services; the theatres and cinemas, restaurants and hotels were packed, and, as food, drink, and other commodities grew scarcer, the queues increased everywhere. Transport tried in vain to cope with civilian and Service demands; quite early in the war one saw strange buses in the streets—buses which had come from Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and elsewhere to give London a helping hand.

The public servants who impressed me most during the years when London was suffering its worst air-raids, were the girls who worked as bus-conductresses. They and their drivers who carried on during the months of blitz and blackout surely deserve a special word of gratitude.

While London became inured to danger, it found the minor troubles of war-time very hard to bear—the shortages of everyday things to which it had grown accustomed, its food and drink, clothing, furniture and household necessities; almost every commodity in daily use was severely rationed, and there can be no doubt that housewives were the most harassed and overworked section of the community. Shopping was a nightmare; the nightmare has not yet vanished; the cares of a household still press very heavily, and thousands of women who had domestic help in peace-time have become weary-drudges whose ceaseless courage and endurance will be rewarded not by medals but by the knowledge that they have kept their House-Flag flying.

War was brought very close to us, not only by our personal experiences, but by graphic stories in the Press, by B.B.C. broadcasts, and by the cinema. British Newsreels showed us pictures of every aspect of the fighting, and of the manifold activities of the home front. American "documentaries"—especially "The March of Time"—took us to every corner of the world. Our fighting services had their own moving-picture units; the British Movietone News, Pathé Gazette, and other newsreel organizations gave us thrilling pictures by their cameramen who were in the forefront of every engagement, and in every spot where news could be gathered by pictures.

We were able, by sitting comfortably in a cinema, to be eyewitnesses of the Anzio beach-head operations, the bombing of Cassino, the sinking of the *Tirpitz*, the campaigns of the 14th Army and the Chindits; of every event from the beginning of the war to its triumphant end. But, apart from amazingly vivid pictures of fighting on all fronts, the camera has scored many triumphs with its documentary films.

The Films Division of the Ministry of Information produced and issued over 185 films in 1944 alone. These were designed to give information as to the countries and people involved in the war, and were divided into five main sections—Military Strategy, Japan, the British Commonwealth, our Far-Eastern Allies, and the Home Front. Among the most notable of our documentaries were "A Harbour Goes to France," "Desert Victory," "Western Approaches," and "The True Glory"—a magnificent combined production by the British and American Ministries of Information.

As many of these films were not only shown in cinemas and theatres but by mobile units which toured the country,

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the war was brought very close indeed to the vast majority of Britons.

* * * * *

Thinking of all these things, of the grimmer as well as the lighter aspects of the Home Front, I find myself recalling—perhaps rather selfishly—my own experiences, and the unpredictable influence which the war had on my activities—an influence which caused this book, and several others, to be written.

None of us has escaped the consequences of that unforgettable Sunday when the voice of Neville Chamberlain told us that we were at war with Germany; but that day flames in my memory for a special personal reason. I saw my little world collapsing, my family perhaps in peril, my future engulfed in unimaginable chaos; and while I alternated between anxiety and philosophy, and my thoughts drifted backwards to my fortunate past, a voice whispered a phrase in my ear, "Drawn from Memory."

I was conscious of an immediate urge to put down a record of my happier days. I had not written anything for publication for over ten years, but I started, and when my pen had run away with me and kept me engrossed for three hours, I had completed a short chapter of autobiography, during that first afternoon of the war, and decided that writing might be a source of comfort to me in the days ahead. It was; it was destined to occupy all my leisure, and before the war ended five books and dozens of my articles had been published, two other books were in course of publication, another completed, and the writing which had been prompted by a sudden urge had proved to be not only a source of absorbing interest to me, but of considerable profit.

That message which almost compelled me to write seemed also to sweep away most of the difficulties associated with authorship—at a time when paper supplies were drastically cut, and the publishing world was beset with problems. The most friendly editors and publishers had apparently been selected for me, and two commissions came "out of the blue" before I had time to continue my autobiography. The editor of *London Opinion* asked me to write a series of monthly articles on the work of our leading humorous artists, for his feature "They Make Us Smile." That series continued throughout the war, a selection of the articles was published as a book, in 1942, and a further selection in 1945.

"The Studio" meanwhile invited me to produce a book for art

amateurs, and I started to build that book, based on my Press Art School's Preparatory Course. The result was the publication, in 1941, of "I Wish I Could Draw," which has since run into four editions.

One evening, in my dugout, during an air-raïd, I started to scribble verses on topical subjects. When I had completed a dozen of these I decided to show them to a Director of Allied Newspapers. He asked me if I could write a verse a day for his series of provincial dailies. I could—and did—for over a year. These were issued as "Ballads of the Blitz," and subsequently published in a book under the title, "Marching On." Then I proceeded with my autobiography, and commenced to record those incidents in my past which happened to come to the surface of my memory.

I could not face the responsibility of tackling such a task in ordered, progressive sequence; for, after all, writing was only a hobby, and I could only hope to sustain my enthusiasm if I wrote when the spirit moved me to talk about the things which set my interest alight—and when leisure permitted. I would mention that my spare time was very restricted. My days were fully occupied by work at my School, and at the Sun Engraving Company. I had Fire-watching duties locally, as well as in London, and air-raids not only kept me very busy, but robbed me of a lot of sleep. In spite of which I managed to proceed with my book.

I wrote ten chapters, and showed them to my publishers—Charles Dickens's publishers!—Chapman and Hall. I was alarmed to hear that they had sent my typescript to Mr. Arthur Waugh, who had been their Chairman but had now retired to become their Literary Adviser and Chief Reader. I had heard of Arthur Waugh's work; he had for many years reviewed books for the *Daily Telegraph*, had himself written and edited many volumes, his judgment had been largely responsible for Chapman and Hall's success, he was father of Alec and Evelyn Waugh, and had an encyclopædic literary knowledge. In addition—as I was afterwards to discover—he was a very charming and open-hearted gentleman. But I was at first horrified as to what this acknowledged expert would say about the reminiscences which had bubbled, uncontrolled, from my pen. This is what Mr. Waugh did say:

"I have spent a very entertaining week-end with Mr. Bradshaw's MS., and am sure he ought to be encouraged to complete it. It might be described as a very unorthodox composition, for it

has none of the proportions or connected narrative of a formal autobiography. Its title describes it accurately—it has the air of a virtuoso bringing out pictures from a portfolio, and displaying them with lively comment. A bit chaotic, perhaps; but every picture has the crowded life, detail and colour of a W. P. Frith, and the portraits are genial and attractive. There is 'no nonsense about literature' in regard to this book; it is just one spate of excellent talk and anecdote, which may be dismissed cheaply by the highbrow, but will greatly please the man-in-the-street. I should certainly take it; and it is worth spending some more money in the way of illustrations."

Need I say that I started, with the greatest pleasure, to convert those ten chapters into a book which I hoped would justify Mr. Waugh's most generous encouragement? I wrote to tell him of my gratitude, and explained that the few chapters which he had seen had been poured out in a hurry—that I had simply picked out the pieces of my jig-saw puzzle which had interested me, at any one particular time, and that the pieces obviously needed fitting together. "Even when they are," I warned him, "they won't be absolutely smooth. My life hasn't been like that. The finished picture is hardly likely to be a 'revealing self-portrait'; other people will be more prominent. My idea is to stand aside and talk about them. I have been so richly rewarded, in later life, for enduring a youth of considerable anxiety that I would rather, in this book, count my blessings than exhibit my bruises."

The book was completed and again shown to Mr. Waugh, who had some shrewd criticism to offer, and advice which I was happy to adopt. I spent a memorable morning with him when my job was finished, he helped me to select the most appropriate illustrations from a large number of pictures which were available, and I was looking forward with the utmost pleasure to showing him the published book of which he had been the godfather. He was an unusually fascinating old gentleman—very wise, full of experience, he had known all the literary giants of the last fifty years, he talked with mellow kindness of the younger men of to-day, his serenity was warmed with a most youthful sense of humour, and I heartily reciprocated his hope that, before long, we should meet again.

It was our last, and only meeting. For Arthur Waugh died—to my genuine grief—before *our* book was published. I am sure he would have been glad to know that two editions were over-

subscribed before publication, and that, but for the paper shortage—which has pressed so hardly on authors and publishers—other editions would have followed. The reception of this book, and the reviews which it received, encouraged me greatly; but I did not wait for its publication before dipping my pen into fresh ink and starting on another book which I had been eager to write. I have an incurable habit of *liking* people, and am grateful to those whose work has given me pleasure—the men or women who have written my favourite books, painted my favourite pictures, or who have acted, sung or played for me. It has been my good fortune to know many of these delightful people; I considered it only fair that I should say something about them; and so I began a series of tributes to twenty of these authors, artists, actors, singers and other celebrities, which became my fifth wartime book, “Nice People to Know.”

You will realize that I was embarking on an exciting adventure when I tell you that to obtain all the information I wanted for my personal portraits, I had tea at Claridges with Anna Neagle, interrupted J. B. Priestley while he was packing for a holiday, talked Art with Sir Frank Brangwyn and Russell Flint in their studios, Drama with Lilian Braithwaite and Noel Coward in their dressing-rooms, and a heap of other things with A. P. Herbert in his bedroom. I lunched with Lady Eleanor Smith, had tea with Dame Laura Knight, tramped round a golf course with Benno Moiseiwitsch, spent many happy hours with my other Brother Savages, Sir Henry J. Wood, Mark Hambourg, Will Fyffe, Norman Allin and Tommy Handley, met Field Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery at the “Savage” and his headquarters, lunched with Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder, was welcomed at the Admiralty by the First Lord, at the Law Courts by Mr. Justice Birkett, and at the Ministry of Reconstruction by Lord Woolton.

If this record suggests to you a series of somewhat overpowering experiences, I want to tell you at once that the invariable impression I obtained from all these outstanding men and women was—Simplicity. There was not a hint of affectation or pomposity, self-importance or austerity in one of them. They were genuinely Nice People, and I did my best to say so in my book.

Has this picture of incessant writing given you the impression of a man driven to ceaseless, unrelenting toil? I do hope not, for I have found writing the happiest kind of relaxation; I “write for fun” just as another man will enjoy gardening or golf; at the

moment, I would rather chat over my experiences with you, than do anything else in the world.

Another of my books (yes, there *was* another!) grew out of my only wartime holiday; and I enjoyed it as much as the holiday itself. I had been away sketching with my friend Ernest Haslehurst. Colonel Astor, the owner of Hever Castle, had allowed us to paint around his lovely home, and, watching Haslehurst's charming work, I was convinced that his was the way in which almost every amateur artist would want to use water-colours. So I suggested to "The Studio" a sequel to "I Wish I could Draw." This idea was welcomed, and Haslehurst and I spent many happy hours together collaborating in the production of a book for which he provided the pictures and I the explanatory letterpress. "I Wish I could Paint" promises to be as popular as its companion volume.

Before it was published, I had embarked on the book which you are now reading. And if, to use Arthur Waugh's words, there is still "no nonsense about Literature" in my work, it may, I hope, be welcomed for what is—a means by which one man can talk to another and pass on a few friendly thoughts of the days I have known.

Thinking over the amount of work I have got through—at my School and the "Sun," my writing, firewatching, and other war-time activities—which have combined to keep me busy for at least twelve hours a day, and realizing also that I have had only a week's holiday since the war started, I am bound to understand why I have been warned about the dangers of overworking.

I can only say that I have never been in better health in my life, and have long since come to the conclusion that, under ordinary peacetime conditions of life, we only use a small portion of our mental and physical equipment. Does the shock of war present a challenge to us, which we instinctively face with all our resources? Does ever-present danger awaken dormant powers and give us additional strength? How otherwise can we explain the fortitude with which the nation has endured its sufferings, or the superhuman achievements of "ordinary" men and women? Are we not told that the nation has been healthier during the war than in days of peace—in spite of the fact that millions of our people have worked far harder than ever before? What explanation have we for the fact that civilians, being transformed into sailors, have endured the appalling cold of the Arctic, that our

soldiers have fought in the blistering heat of the Tropics, that our airmen have lived in perpetual danger—and that they have displayed endurance and courage which has frequently become heroism?

Are not all these things explained by the fact that life has been given a more vital and urgent purpose—that we have been called suddenly to answer a supreme challenge—that we have not been allowed to relax? In short, have not these years swept away slackness of mind and body, and given us an inspiration which we needed? Trivialities and idle pleasures, schemes for using up time lazily have been banished; the curtailment of entertainment has directed our energies into far more productive channels; our minds have been swept clean of petty worries. Something bigger has been substituted; and looking round at the efforts of my fellow-countrymen and women, I realize that I have merely responded, in a very unspectacular way, to the stimulus which "our finest hour" has provided.

In these memories I have chatted a good deal about the Past, but I hope that mine have not grown into the musings of a garrulous old man. "Those were the days!" is a nostalgic attitude I have never adopted. I have happy memories, but To-day and To-morrow will always be far more important to me than Yesterday. I am not conscious, yet, of a break in the rhythm of life, or—I confess—of remorse for missed opportunities. I have no intention of turning my thoughts inwards and of trying to picture myself as an interesting martyr. A critic referring to my "Drawn from Memory," informed his readers that I wrote with "boyish gusto." I hope he is right, and that I shall continue to do so. Better, surely, to face the future with hope than with disillusionment?

I have little patience with the men and women—especially those who have been very successful—who seem to enjoy looking back on the days of their struggles, and investing them with a glow of regret and rapture. "*Those* were the days!" they exclaim. "The days when we were young and poor!" Surely such men and women who have arrived somewhere near the goal towards which they aimed should be thanking God for their good fortune instead of casting a cloud of synthetic glamour over their past?

I know that the world has treated me very kindly, and that my trials and anxieties have not robbed me of a useful brand of philosophy. I have never grown up, and at this moment especially,

I realize that my thoughts are as undisciplined and uncontrolled as the flames of the fire; I only know that I want to give expression to those wandering thoughts, warmed by the glowing embers and the bursts of flame into sudden vivid pictures.

I find that I am trying to decide what kind of a human being I am. If I looked at my birth certificate I should be reminded that I am old. And yet, enthusiasm has never left me, each day promises—and usually provides—new adventure; disillusionment or boredom are things that mercifully have passed me by. And if a troubled youngster asked me for the secret of a happy life, I should ask him to wish for three gifts—Tolerance, a Sense of Proportion, and a Sense of Humour.

For Tolerance helps you to avoid hasty judgments, to sympathize with other people's troubles, to avoid captious criticism, to realize that even the nicest human beings are not infallible.

A sense of Proportion establishes your own position in relation to the world around you, reminds you of the fatuous absurdity of any form of conceit or self-importance, helps you to analyse the value to the community of your work and your individuality. It should adjust immediately the character of your achievements in relation to those of others in your own sphere of endeavour, and place you in your right relationship with all the larger aspects of life.

A Sense of Humour is almost inseparable from Tolerance and Proportion. Of course, I do not relate a Sense of Humour to the stock-in-trade of the funny man, to a facility for cracking jokes, or being the "life and soul of the party." I regard it as the sunnier side of Philosophy, a kindliness and friendliness which should govern your attitude to almost every situation; emphatically not something that turns a tragic situation to farce, or diminishes by a fraction the true character of a serious incident; but an invaluable aid to relieving anxiety and restoring judgment. Sympathy should always be the mainspring of a sense of humour, the desire to comfort those who have lost their balance and who are unconsciously magnifying a relatively small trouble into a tragedy.

Do all those simple human qualities imply a placid acceptance of injustice, the turning of a blind eye to cruelty, a lazy disregard of all forms of trouble? They do *not*; they do not excuse crime or misdemeanour, they simply give one time for considered judgment. But there are some injustices which considered judgment only magnifies, in my eyes—ordinary, everyday things which put the severest strain on whatever tolerance, sense of proportion and

sense of humour I possess. And the first of these familiar things for which I can seldom find any excuse is—bad temper.

Perhaps, because I have not lost my temper for over thirty years, and am still ashamed of my memory of that occasion, I regard any exhibition of temper with disgust and contempt. The chief reason for this attitude is that an outburst of temper is so vulgar, and, as a rule, so grossly unfair. I need all my self-control when I remember the occasions on which I have seen a bad-tempered bully venting his quite unjustified anger on a sensitive person—perhaps a junior member of his staff who could not afford to answer back. Bad temper so often takes a mean advantage; it is not always used against a person who can give the aggressor a salutary lesson. It often flames up unexpectedly when the victim is entirely unprepared; it stuns the victim into a helplessness that seems to feed the wrath of the bully. And before his venom has been extracted, one more person is made unhappy.

Temper is surely the child of selfishness and of an infantile love of authority. The old-fashioned "Boss" has—God be praised—become a much rarer bird than he was in the past. I remember a boss of my young days who persistently terrified his ill-paid staff, who wielded unbridled authority because none of his satellites could afford to tell him just what kind of a blackguard he was. That man had drilled himself into being an inhuman taskmaster—he had a one-track mind which was solely occupied with his own advancement; success—and still more success—was his one aim in life; more and more money, less and less humanity. He regarded his own petty achievements as the most important things in life, and touched the very depths of absurdity in his self-satisfaction.

I happen to control staffs and assistants, and have never felt the need to bark out orders like a drill-sergeant. I have obtained the most generous service by asking instead of commanding, by friendliness instead of bluster, by remembering that my associates are fellow-human beings and loyal helpers. I have never fought for success or craved for power, and have been blessed far beyond my deserts by remembering my favourite adage, "Art is controlled emotion." I am profoundly grateful for any small successes that have been granted to me, and have never forgotten the help which other people have contributed to those successes.

While I have been able to face the major worries of my life—and they have been many—with philosophy and fortitude, I have needed all my self-control to face little irritations and stupidities.

A tapping blind-cord will strain my nerves to an infinitely greater degree than a thunderstorm; a lost collar-stud, a mislaid pipe, a long journey without cigarettes, all shake my sense of proportion and induce a sense of martyrdom; the pretentious or spurious annoys me, for it implies dishonesty; conceit mystifies me and then fills me with contempt; but above all these things I find bad temper the least endurable and excusable of all human failings.

I am frequently wondering why bad temper is so often tolerated—especially in these days when everybody has been forcibly cheated of so much happiness. I try to analyse the cause of temper. Obviously, lack of discipline and self-control; occasionally an inverted inferiority complex which finds a sour outlet in the desire to dominate; often, a frustrated ambition, a perverted sense of proportion which assumes that the lighter things of life are a waste of time.

The ferocious idiot who has persuaded himself that his little job is the most important thing on earth, and who uses bad temper and bullying as a means of getting that job done, is my special *bête noire*. But even he can be cured. I usually deal with the furious voice at the other end of the 'phone by requesting its owner to speak louder. And the louder he screams the more patiently I pretend not to hear him. When, finally, with my receiver at a distance which removes my ear-drums from the danger zone, I quietly remark that there is obviously something wrong with the line, and will he please write, he usually retires from the contest. I once used an alternative method to somebody who was shouting at me, quietly remarking, that if this was a competition for the loudest noise, I should like to enter. I proceeded to yell back at the top of my voice until my fellow-competitor decided to close the windows.

In my early days I had far more than my fair share of worry, until I decided that nothing was overwhelmingly important except death, and that while I lived I would regard worry and anxiety simply as forms of mental exercise, as a test of endurance, a problem which needed quiet consideration.

All these things are surely so simple that I am labouring the obvious, but I do feel most deeply that Tolerance is a vitally important quality in all human relationships, and that the possession of a sense of Humour and of Proportion would have saved the world untold misery.

It was the lack of these qualities which was responsible for Hitler and his associates. The lust for power and domination, conceit which led to megalomania, evil temper, bullying, and its development into savagery—all these culminated in a nightmare of bestiality which almost engulfed the world and from which humanity barely escaped.

Is it not therefore the duty of each one of us who has been spared to see the dawn of Peace to play his or her part in the spread of tolerance and of the other simple virtues which can add so greatly to human happiness and contentment?

THE END

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